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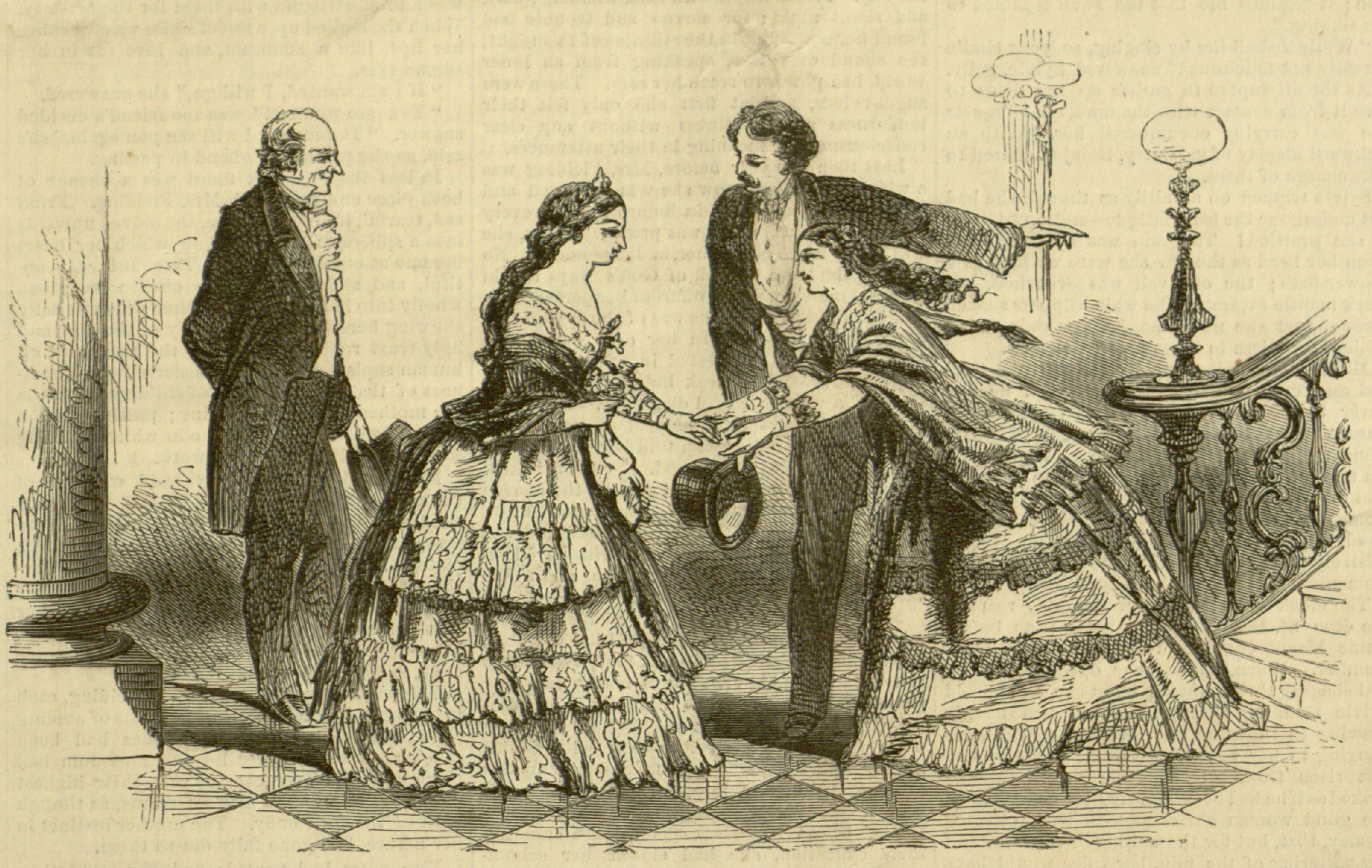

OLD FRIENDS.

## THE ISLE AND STAR.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

In the tropical seas
  There's a beautiful isle,
Where storms never darken
  The sunlight's soft smile.
There the hymn of the breeze
  And the hymn of the stream
Are mingled in one,
  Like sweet sounds in a dream.
There the song-birds at morn
  From the thick shadows start,
Like musical thoughts
  From the poet's full heart.
There the song-birds at noon,
  Sit in silence unbroken,
Like an exquisite dream
  In the bosom, unspoken.
There the flowers hang like rainbows
  On wildwood and lea—
O, say wilt thou dwell
  In that sweet isle with me?

In the depths of the sky
  There's a beautiful star,
Where no yew casts a shadow
  The bright scene to mar.
There the rainbows ne'er fade,
  And the dews are ne'er dry,
And a circlet of moons
  Ever shines in the sky.
There the songs of the blest,
  And the songs of the spheres,
Are unceasingly heard
  Through the infinite years.
There the soft airs float down
  From the amaranth bowers,
All faint with the perfume
  Of Eden's own flowers.
There truth, love and beauty
  Immortal will be—
O, say, wilt thou dwell
  In that sweet star with me?

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## THE MUTE SINGER.

BY ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

### CHAPTER VIII.

### RUSTLING LAURELS.

One person, at least, enjoyed the repast that Sylvie's inconsequent father had so lavishly provided, and that was the prodigal purveyor himself. He presided at his humble board with lordly bearing, and as though he were entertaining, in place of his pale-faced wife and drooping daughter, and their unassuming friend, a host of distinguished guests. It was long since he had tasted wine, especially of a quality as irreproachable as that which he now liberally quaffed, and he drank to the health of Sylvie, then to that of Maitre Beaujeu, then to the prosperity of musicians in general, then toasted, in flowery phrase, the muse of music, then all her sister muses, and then the world at large! With every glass, his naturally expansive heart opened wider and wider, until it took in all humanity.

Just as Sylvie placed the dessert upon the table, a troop of eager *friends* poured in; for, the instant Fortune smiled promisingly upon the De la Roches, they discovered that they possessed numberless *friends* whom they never before dreamed of enrolling in Friendship's category. These good, disinterested, *incurious* people came to offer their congratulations and proffer their services. De la Roche received them *en grand Seigneur*, graciously appropriating their compliments, as though their homage were entirely due to himself.

It was not possible to invite all the visiters to be seated, for the poor apartment contained but four chairs, the piano stool, and one low bench. These, however, were soon occupied, and the side of the bed converted into a sofa. After that, the new-comers were obliged to stand, as were Sylvie, her parents, and Ursule.

The delighted host requested every one present to favor him by drinking a bumper to the future laurels of the young singer, and poured the ruddy wine without stint. Mildly rebuking her forgetfulness by a look, he desired Sylvie to hand the tarts, strawberries and cherries to their esteemed guests. With tottering feet, and trying to force a few feeble smiles, she obeyed; but the ever-watchful Ursule, perceiving her unfitness to discharge even this light office of hospitality, caught the dishes from her hands, and, casting a by no means gentle glance at De la Roche as she passed him, whispered, "It is more proper for *me* to do this, and do you not see how fatigued she is?"

Too much elated by the glory of the hour to notice an intimation that his daughter was incapable of the required exertion through weakness, he quickly took the hint that it was too great a condescension for a newly crowned queen of song to wait upon her lowly admirers. He proudly drew her to his side, and with one arm around her slender form, stretched the other commandingly towards the assemblage, and harangued his guests with oratorical emphasis. Light peals of bombast intermingled with showers of roses. He thanked them for the honor of this visit—he might say, the sunlight of their presence;—for their admiration of his child, which he modestly admitted was by no means misplaced;—he told them that though he would ere long be compelled to remove from their midst—though possibly his path of life, once so thorny, now about to be thickly strewn with flowers, would so widely diverge from theirs that they might meet no more upon this side of eternity, he should never forget the kindness, the sympathy, the devotion of the unpretending friends who had poured balm upon his healing wounds!—he assured them he would never look down upon the lowliest of that little band, however high the position he might be called upon to occupy;—and that he would bury beneath the waters of oblivion all remembrance of the countless inconveniences to which he had for some years been subjected, when he recollected the happiness of this moment, the proudest of his chequered life!

Claret, weak and unintoxicating beverage as it is usually deemed by the French, when it chances to be the juice of as fine a vintage as that which had been selected by Monsieur de la Roche, *may* mount to a constitutionally light brain, and we are inclined to think that this gentleman's natural hilarity and volubility were increased by the unwonted stimulus. A stranger would certainly have arrived at the conclusion that he was a wronged and estimable individual, who had just received some rightful inheritance, of which he had long been unlawfully deprived, or that he had amassed a fortune through his own ability and untiring industry, which he was now permitted to enjoy for the smooth remainder of his days.

A couple of hours had elapsed, but the good people seemed very unwilling to disperse. Ursule, finding that no one stirred, though bottles and dishes were alike empty, took Dame Manot into her confidence, told her that Sylvie was too feeble to undergo this prolonged excitement, and begged that she would give a *moving* hint to her friends. The considerate dame, who had a sincere affection for Sylvie, managed so admirably that the gratified visitors rapidly took their departure.

De la Roche, elated to the highest pitch of restlessness, could not have tarried with the rather dull family party that remained. He took up his hat, and told his smileless wife that he meant to visit the *Théatre Francais*, and see the famous Rachel, the light of whose genius had just burst upon the Parisian world.

Ursule was strongly inclined to remonstrate. "You cannot afford it! You have nearly wasted all the poor child's earnings already!" were the words that rose to her lips, but she had not the courage to utter the just rebuke, and Monsieur de la Roche departed.

To get Sylvie to bed was the next most important move, but how was it to be effected without awakening the fears of Madame de la Roche? All Ursule's tact was needed to avoid that undesirable result. The unreasonable mother had several times during the day expressed her conviction that she was about to lose all authority over her child, and Ursule thought to turn this weakness to account. If the suggestion that Sylvie ought to retire emanated from Madame de la Roche herself, and went forth in the shape of a command, her mind might be diverted from examining into the need of such an order.

The ready-witted old maid took her aside, and said:

"Monsieur de la Roche is very unreasonable; he has not proper consideration for Sylvie. You really will be obliged to exert *your* maternal rights and interfere. He made her stand for full two hours, while your chairs were all occupied by those stupid people whom he chose to entertain very superfluously. If you take my advice, you will order Sylvie off to bed, and insist upon her resting. Do not mind her showing disinclination to go; use a little needful authority; you are her mother, and you can make her obey."

Madame de la Roche greedily swallowed the bait, and was highly pleased to feel herself of a little importance; for, during the events of the last week, she had become more completely a nonentity than ever. With quite a show of command, she desired Sylvie to retire forthwith.

The weary girl failed to play her part in the little drama by even a faint appearance of unwillingness, but Ursule covered the deficiency by treating her as though she had positively rebelled.

"Now, Sylvie," said the good creature, deprecatingly, "do not argue with your mother, and try to gainsay her wishes. Don't you understand that she chooses you to go to bed? Do be off, at once, like a good girl, and don't dispute her orders; *she* knows what is for your good. Come, I will be your lady's maid, and undress you."

With a parade of compulsion, she led the unresisting girl into the little chamber, and helped her to disrobe, and thus afforded her aid which she sorely needed.

Sylvie slumbered more tranquilly than upon the previous night. She rose the next morning partially restored, yet it seemed as though something ailed her—she could not definitely tell *what;* she experienced no actual pain, but was oppressed by a sinking sensation that incapacitated her from energetic action. Strength of will, however, partially supplied the place of strength of *physique*. She went through the round of her daily occupations without uttering a complaint, thus escaping her mother's close scrutiny; the observation of her thoughtless father it was always easy to avoid.

Maitre Beaujeu made his instructions very brief, her voice required repose, he said. When the lesson ended, he remarked:

"Now you must walk out. Go to the *Tuileries*, or the *Champs Elysées*, or where you please, but you must have fresh air and exercise." Turning to her mother, he added, "Will you accompany her, Madame?"

"How is it possible to spare the time?" she answered, rebelliously, "I must sew, and Sylvie ought to practise."

"I tell you *she ought to walk!*" thundered Beaujeu, biting his lips to restrain his ire. "If *you* do not choose to go with *your daughter*, I will accompany *my pupil*, to whom air and exercise are of vital importance."

Madame de la Roche, who writhed under Beaujeu's control, thought that to consent to this latter alternative, would be giving the reins too completely into his hands; she answered quickly:

"No, if she is to go, *I* will accompany her."

"Very well, as you please," replied Beaujeu, taking up his violin. "Do not forget the directions I gave yesterday, in regard to your diet, Sylvie, and be sure you spend at least a couple of hours in the open air!"

"Aye, we'll *spend!* No fear of forgetting *that*. We do nothing *but spend!*" sighed the lugubrious mother, as he disappeared; "*spend* time unprofitably, and *spend* money recklessly! it is disheartening. But we are not allowed to rule our own actions, and must submit to our fate."

Sylvie heartily enjoyed the rarely accorded pleasure of a promenade on the *Champs Elysées*, in spite of her mother's lengthy tirade against the cruel despotism of Maitre Beaujeu, and her constantly bemoaning the waste of time of which he compelled them to be guilty.

Monsieur de la Roche was diligently occupied in seeking for handsome apartments; and, having found a furnished suite that struck his fancy, he would have engaged it, and commenced moving at once, had not Sylvie ventured very gently, but firmly, to oppose this rash step. She failed, however, to make him see his imprudence, or to alter his determination, until she reminded him that they would not be permitted to leave their present lodging without paying the amount due up to the time for which it was rented, and begged him to count what funds remained, and calculate whether this was possible. He complied, merely to humor such an excellent little daughter, he said, though it was nonsense, for they had more than sufficient. On finding out his error, he was a little staggered, and Sylvie gained the day Her father magnanimously consented to postpone the proposed removal until after her next appearance!

If Sylvie herself lacked strength, her voice had lost no power;—it was never richer; never sweeter; never more wondrously flexible.

Ursule alone noticed that her hands were still feverish, and that a hectic flush crimsoned her usually pale cheeks, and faded away again at brief intervals.

That Monsieur de la Roche should be among his daughter's auditor's at the Duke de———'s was out of the question. The concert was given by the Duke to his friends, who received cards of invitation. The evening was to close with a grand ball.

Sylvie's father resigned himself to the unavoidable privation more philosophically than could have been expected, but found consolation by largely indulging in glorious visions of the time when the novice of to-day would break loose from her master's leading strings, and be solely under paternal guidance.

Sylvie was engaged to repeat the three airs she had sung with so much *éclat* at the *Salle Ste. Cecile*. This was a politic arrangement on the part of Maitre Beaujeu, for she was not only spared the fatigue of fresh study, but the verdict passed upon her execution of those songs was too enthusiastically favorable for her success to be in any peril.

Her surprise was as great as her gratification when Maitre Beaujeu, on the morning of the concert, laid a chaplet, dexterously woven, of ivy leaves, upon the piano; and bade her wear it in her hair that night. A delicate attention from her rough master might well excite as much wonder as gratitude.

He had a quick eye and ready worship for the beautiful; he constantly lamented Sylvie's unattractive looks, and pondered on the possibility of improving them. As his back was always turned when she was singing, he was unaware of the electrifying change that was wrought by the outgushing of that melody which had its fountain in the recesses of her soul. He had selected this ivy wreath because he knew that it would display to advantage her luxuriant, dark hair, and finely shaped head, and give a classic effect to her pale countenance. Frenchman as he was, he had chosen *natural* leaves as best suited to the unartificial wearer.

Much as Sylvie prized her master's token, it did not cause her to slight Mathieu's offering of bright geranium blossoms. Those she wore in her bosom.

"Now for it! How does the white silk dress become you? Is not my garland of ivy just the thing to set it off? I expect to see you trying to pass for a beauty to-night!" said Maitre Beaujeu, as he entered the room to take charge of his pupil; then added, looking at her more closely. "Why—this is not white silk? Surely this is the common little frock you wore before! What has become of the grand toilette you were preparing? Has your skillful mantua-maker spoiled the white silk in the cutting?"

Monsieur de la Roche, who was standing by, grew nervous. He felt the thunder clouds gathering over his head, and looked uneasily at Sylvie, who had not the presence of mind to answer.

Ursule replied, with some asperity: "I have not spoiled the white silk, Monsieur; and if it's not ready for to-night, it's no fault of *Sylvie's*, nor of *mine*."

Monsieur de la Roche was seized with a violent fit of coughing, during which he darted pleading glances at the dressmaker.

Her heart had long been troubled with a chronic softness, that incapacitated her from resisting the least appeal to her generosity, and she concluded the speech, so spitefully commenced, with: "The white silk will do for the next time. *She shall certainly wear it then!*" (with quite a determined look at the father.) Then to divert Maitre Beaujeu's suspicions, remarked: "Those ivy leaves give Sylvie a Norma-like look. Did you ever see her appear to such advantage?"

"No, never. But I wish her *best* were *better*," Beaujeu could not resist the temptation to remark.

Sylvie laughed with unconcerned good humor, which showed that she had too little vanity for it to be wounded, and answered: "If *I* were as beautiful as *you* are frank, one might be contented. Might one not, my master?"

Beaujeu had ordered a *fiacre*, an indulgence his restricted means had not allowed on the two former occasions. When they reached the courtyard of the palatial mansion of the duke, the driver stopped. A crowd of equipages passed in, but he knew that it would be improper for his humble vehicle to approach nearer. Sylvie and her master alighted.

What a scene of Eastern enchantment burst on their sight as they entered the gate! The *court* was brilliantly illuminated with colored lamps, rising from baskets of flowers; in the centre a fountain sent up sparkling jets, that reflected prismatic hues as they fell over statues of water nymphs; the whole round of the court was girdled by a wall of blossoming orange and lemon trees, intermingled with flowering shrubs and the rarest exotics. A gorgeous carpet, softer than the most velvety turf, was spread upon the marble steps and over the path that led to the carriages.

Sylvie gazed about her in rapturous amazement. She imagined herself suddenly transported to some ideal land which she had only beheld in her dreams. She would gladly have lingered to examine the flowers and inhale their entrancing perfume; but Maitre Beaujeu hurried her on, for they were later than usual.

Monsieur Le Grand greeted them with almost oppressive cordiality, as they entered the sumptuous apartment appropriated to the musicians. And when they were conducted to the concert hall, and Sylvie took her place among the singers, an audible murmur of delight ran through the crowd. She was immediately recognized; and the audience betrayed so much impatience to hear her voice once more, that not the faintest attempt was made to *encore* a single performer who preceded her.

When her turn came, she rose with graceful self-possession, and did not *again* forget to salute the spectators.

When she sang in public before, she had beheld no one—had been conscious of no presence—had hardly remembered that she was not in her own humble little chamber. Now, amid the crowd, *one* face shone distinctly, throwing all others into a background of shadows; ay, *shone*, for to her excited vision that peerless head almost seemed encircled by a luminous halo. The countenance was that which had haunted her dreams, and risen night and day, unsummoned, before her waking sight. With the eyes of her mind she had not seen it less clearly than she saw it now. She was singing, not to the noble assemblage who breathlessly drank in the seraphic sounds that poured from her lips, but to one being only—one to whom she had never dared to open those lips in speech. Not that she analyzed her own tumultuous emotions, or knew what she was doing, or comprehended the intensity of feeling, the holy fervor, which she threw into the love-breathing music.

The audience had been charmed when they listened to her "*O Mio Fernando!*" at the Salle Ste. Cecille; but now, the impassioned tone—the *abandon*—the reality that spoke in voice and look, penetrated the coldest heart, and created a perfect *furor*, by which the most insensible listener was carried away.

All Sylvie's weakness had vanished—she had never felt stronger, more elastic, more at her ease. Her step was firm, her movements were free, her bosom rose and sank with full and deep inspiration; if her pulses were rapid, they were also regular. She was exhilarated to the highest degree of pleasurable excitement which she had ever experienced. Was it the stimulus of adulation, the throb of gratified vanity, that awoke this ecstatic sensation? Was it the exercise of the wonderful gift with which she had been endowed? Was it the dawning of some new, uncomprehended capacity of soul that filled her with its sweet, palpitating strangeness? She could not have answered these questions herself.

She did not hear what was said to her, and answered at random. She could not have told afterwards who had addressed her, or even whether her master had spoken to her. The loud acclamations conveyed no meaning to her ears—the waving handkerchiefs none to her eyes—until she saw one arm lifted, and from that hand floated her banner of triumph.

When the concert was over, as Sylvie stood with her arm in that of Maitre Beaujeu, looking proudly happy, and bowing her adieux to Monsieur Le Grand, many of the audience thronged around the latter, and begged to be presented to the young stranger. Before he could comply, Honorine had forced her way through the crowd, and, with the Marquis de St. Amar, reached her side.

"I am commissioned by the duke," said the little sprite, "to beg you to remain to the ball. Let me add my entreaties to his. You do not look fatigued to-night—you seem delightfully fresh. Do stay! Will you not?"

Sylvie's glowing face expressed no disinclination to consent. "If Maitre Beaujeu does not object," she answered, turning her eyes upon him, with a look of mingled submission and entreaty.

"I am sure Monsieur Beaujeu will not refuse us this petition?" replied Honorine, addressing him in a tone of bewitching supplication.

"If I thought Mademoiselle de la Roche would not suffer from fatigue," he answered, "the honor——"

Sylvie interrupted him.

"I am not in the least tired, my dear master. If I may, I should like to stay."

"And Monsieur says distinctly that you *may*. That look of his bade me tell you so," rejoined the lively Honorine. "I can read faces, and his is a very expressive one. Don't you think so?" asked the little flatterer.

"My master quarrels with me when I am saucy enough to tell him what his eyes betray," replied Sylvie, archly.

"He will not deny that *I* have interpreted his look rightly, will you, Monsieur Beaujeu?" inquired the syren.

"That is a liberty I could not venture to take," returned the musician, not a little charmed at having such a pair of clear, frank, brown eyes fastened upon his time-furrowed visage.

"Oh! thank you, Monsieur Beaujeu; but we must take immediate possession of Mademoiselle de la Roche, else a host of admirers will be running away with her. So, Mademoiselle Sylvie, take my brother's arm, and——"

Sylvie started violently, and the blood leapt in a sudden torrent to her cheeks and brow.

"But allow me first to present my brother, the Marquis de St. Amar," resumed Honorine. "How surprised you look! Are you astonished that such a grave-looking personage should have such a wilful, troublesome little torment of a sister? At all events, as he happens to have no other, he has no better. But do tell me for whom did you take me?"

"I imagined—I understood that—somebody said you were Madame la Marquise de St. Amar."

Honorine's low, merry laughter rang out like the rapid sweeping of a hand over harp-strings.

Her brother replied—

"No, Mademoiselle; should I ever choose a wife, it will not be such an elfish, little gossamer as this butterfly sister of mine."

"Of course not; he will court some awfully stately and oppressively sensible person, who will frighten me out of my wits whenever I come into her august presence, and whom I shall mortally detest, and never be able to call 'sister.' But I'll take my revenge by never inviting the odious pair to the concerts I give, and by always having you to sing for me. Now, as my brother is passionately fond of music, that will punish him for inflicting a bore upon me as a relative."

This bantering conversation was interrupted by Monsieur Le Grand, who, with profuse apologies to Mademoiselle de St. Amar, presented a number of ladies and gentlemen to the youthful singer.

Sylvie replied to their compliments with grateful humility, and answered their inquiries with unembarrassed propriety. Her modest artlessness was wholly free from a touch of shyness. It seemed as though the manners of good society had suddenly been engrafted upon her by the very atmosphere she was breathing.

She stood between Honorine and her brother, the load-star of a wide circle of admirers. Maitre Beaujeu, at a distance, watched her in mute amazement, as with unaffected ease she turned to each person who addressed her, smilingly accepted floral offerings, and gaily entered into conversation with old and young.

The rosy glow upon her cheeks kindled up her eyes until they seemed to shoot forth effulgent rays; her lips, even when silent, spoke through the eloquently varying expression that wreathed, or curved, or parted the dewy mouth; her fragile form had lost its willow-like droop, and the statuesque grace of her *poses* could not be surpassed by a sculptor's ideal. Beaujeu found it impossible to recognize his sallow-visaged, bent, weak, meagre, little pupil in the resplendent being that stood before him, calmly receiving the homage of an admiring crowd. In one hour the feeble, shrinking girl had matured into strong and self-reliant womanhood—every bud of promise had suddenly sprung into glorious bloom. There was glamour in the marvellous unfolding.

As he gazed upon her she moved away, accompanied by Honorine, the Marquis, and the Duke. Beaujeu followed her with his eyes only. Astonishment transfixed him to the spot.

Midnight sounded. The lateness of the hour aroused him. It was time to conduct her home. She was delicate in the extreme, and her health might suffer from this unusual dissipation. He wandered from saloon to saloon, searching for her in vain.

At last, through a small opening in the crowd, he caught a glimpse of the ivy circlet which he had ordered that morning, little dreaming that the head for which it was destined would wear it so regally. With considerable difficulty he made his way through the throng. Honorine and Sylvie were standing together beside the sumptuously spread supper-table. The Marquis was in the act of handing the latter a golden shell, holding an ice that had the hue and form of a peach. Though the humble maiden had certainly never seen frozen cream in this attractive shape, or taken in her dainty fingers a shining shell of gold, in lieu of a plate, she betrayed not the faintest token of surprise; her thoughts were so much engrossed that she experienced none; or else everything by which she was surrounded seemed so entirely the work of enchantment that she had ceased to wonder.

"It is very late, Mademoiselle Sylvie," (Beaujeu uttered the *Mademoiselle* involuntarily,—he could not have accosted her as was his wont;) "you must be fatigued—it is time for us to take our leave."

"*Must* we go, my master? I am not in the least tired!"

Voices on every side protested against her departure.

"I cannot think of parting with her yet, Monsieur Beaujeu. Leave her with us a little while longer," petitioned Honorine.

Sylvie repeated the words, "a little while longer," in a wishful tone. She could not bear to have her dream broken so soon.

The old man shook his head, but not very determinedly.

"There are large odds against you, Monsieur Beaujeu," said the Marquis de St. Amar. "You will be obliged to yield and grant us the happiness of Mademoiselle de la Roche's presence for awhile longer."

Sylvie's eyes shone with redoubled lustre, but the lids dropped suddenly over them, as though they feared to betray their own exultant gleaming.

Beaujeu bowed assent, without remonstrating, and withdrew.

Another hour passed, and still another. Sylvie had flitted away, and her master had again lost sight of her. She was now in the ball-room, watching with eager interest the gliding figures that, as they threaded the mazes of the dance, were reflected in mirrors which lined the spacious saloon from ceiling to floor.

Honorine was dancing, or rather floating through the air, as though her fairy feet were under no compulsion to touch the ground. Her brother, with stately movements, that kept perfect time to the inspiring music, without stooping to Terpsichorean steps, was leading a fair young partner through the same set. The Duke was conversing with Sylvie, but her eyes were turned from him and rested upon the dancers.

Honorine was the first to spy Beaujeu, wending his way towards his pupil. Fortunately the dance had just concluded, and, courtesying hurriedly to her partner, she joined her brother, exclaiming, "There is the hawk in pursuit of our singing bird, let us fly to the rescue, or he will capture and carry her away."

But, before they could reach Sylvie, her tutor had told her that it was time to depart in a tone so peremptory that it silenced objection. She had made her adieu to the Duke, and allowed herself to be led away.

"You are not going yet, Monsieur Beaujeu?" cried Honorine, following them. "Stanislaus is so cross with me for having compelled him to dance when he wanted to be more agreeably occupied, that I shall not be able to obtain his pardon to-night if you leave the moment the dance is over."

"What nonsense you talk, little mad cap," retorted the Marquis. "I trust Monsieur Beaujeu, you will allow us the pleasure of taking Mademoiselle de la Roche and yourself home."

"Many thanks, Monsieur le Marquis, for the proposed honor," replied Beaujeu, "but we have a conveyance which has been waiting for some hours."

"No matter, send it away," urged Honorine, "and let us take you."

"You are very kind, Mademoiselle, but we will not give you the trouble;" answered the musician, with an air of such firm declination that, although Honorine looked disappointed, good breeding forbade her to remonstrate.

At that moment the Duke addressed the Marquis and his sister, asking their advice about a *fête champêtre* which he was about to give. Without further leave-taking, Beaujeu conducted Sylvie to the apartment where she had left her wrappings.

On passing out of the street-door they found that it was raining fast. They hurried through the court yard to the gate, where Beaujeu expected to find his *fiacre* waiting;—it was not to be seen. In vain he hunted among the splendid equipages, the plebeian conveyance had disappeared! After many inquiries, he obtained the startling information that a *fiacre* had stood there until within an hour, but that the driver got into a dispute with one of the coachmen, and on the approach of the police, fearing that he might be arrested, had driven away too rapidly for pursuit.

"What are we to do?" broke forth Beaujeu, in deep distress. "How is it possible for you to walk in this pouring rain? It is dreadful! It will ruin your voice! It will kill you! You will certainly take your death of cold!"

"Don't believe *that*, my dear master. I am quite able to walk. The air will refresh me, and as for the rain," she added gaily, "I do not feel it—I do not mind it more than——"

"Than a *swan?*" added Beaujeu in a tone of compliment that sounded strangely, it so rarely found voice on his lips. The next instant he shuddered, and said, "I do not like the comparison; it reminds me that the swan is fabled to die singing."

"While *I* shall *live* by singing, so your simile is really not felicitous!" answered Sylvie, gaily.

As she attempted to gather up her dress to save it from contact with the mud, the bouquets she was carrying encumbered her. With an awkward display of gallantry, Beaujeu offered to take charge of them.

Sylvie tripped on as airily as though she had not undergone the least fatigue—and how blithely she prattled! The rain was beating down upon her head as though she were walking in a shower-bath; the old veil was drenched, the black mantle saturated, the white slippers soaked through, yet she never heeded—or only found subject for mirth in these inconveniences.

Maitre Beaujeu listened to her pleasant talk, and answered with a deference which he had never before shown. Ever and anon, he inwardly asked himself, with a sense of vague wonder, if this were indeed Sylvie. He felt that his mind was brought into communion not with that of a mere undeveloped girl; but that of a woman of aptitude and intellect, guileless as girlhood, but salient, sparkling, comprehensive, intuitively adapting itself to circumstances, as womanhood in its finest manifestation.

The clock had struck four ere they reached the Rue St. Denis. It was some time before Dame Manot could be roused from her heavy slumber. When, at last, she opened the door and sleepily thrust out her night-cap, and beheld Sylvie standing without, her veil and mantle blowing in the wind, the dripping white dress clinging to her lithe limbs as though she had just risen from a bath, while Maitre Beaujeu looked as if he had been drowned and resuscitated, the good woman shrieked with such genuine dismay, that, but for the wailing of the wind and the pattering of the rain, her voice would have summoned the guardians of the night.

"Stop your unearthly howling!" growled Maitre Beaujeu, trying to pass her. "What is the matter with the woman?"

"Ah! what is the matter with Sylvie, rather!" cried the Dame. "Has she failed? Has she been disgraced? Ah! what has happened?"

Maitre Beaujeu disdained to give any explanation of their present plight; but Sylvie stopped him as he was hurrying her on.

"You see how you must have misjudged this kind friend the other day, my master! You see how grieved she is when she thinks I have not succeeded! Was I not right to believe that she rejoiced at my good fortune?" Then she turned soothingly to the shivering *concierge.* "Nothing is the matter, Dame Manot, except that the *fiacre* disappeared; the driver got into a quarrel and drove off without leave. We were obliged to walk; but everything else went well; it has been the happiest evening of my life!"

As they were ascending the stairs Beaujeu inquired, "at what hour to-morrow do you wish to take your lesson?"

It was the first time he had ever consulted her pleasure or convenience.

"At whatever hour suits you best," replied Sylvie, with her wonted humility.

"But have you any preference? I can make my time conform to yours."

"That would not be right; I am only too grateful to receive my lessons whenever your leisure serves."

The old man stopped suddenly, and seizing both her hands, asked with emotion, "Sylvie, will you *always* be grateful? Will not contact with the idol-making world change your nature? Will not the hot touch of aristocratic palms brush away the delicate bloom from your character? Will not the voice of adulation poison its sweetness? Will not world-knowledge destroy your holy innocence? Will you always be what you are now?"

"If I am—if I do not grow *much better*, my master, you will have cause to blush for me."

They were at her chamber door. Beaujeu released her hands—laid the bouquets, he was carrying, in her arms, and went on his way.

Ursule was sitting up with Sylvie's parents, counting the hours, as they slowly passed. It is needless to state that Madame de la Roche had worked herself into a state of almost frantic alarm at her daughter's non-appearance. Her husband's sanguine temperament, which always anticipated that which was most agreeable, caused him to conjecture rightly in this instance. He was perfectly certain that, after the concert concluded, the rising star had been solicited to shine upon the ball. Though Ursule gladly accepted this explanatton of Sylvie's prolonged absence, Madame de la Roche refused to give credence to any solution so pleasant and satisfactory.

When, at last, Sylvie entered, dripping with the rain, she was greeted by a general cry of compassionate distress; but her beaming face, still flushed with the roses of triumph, her glittering, dancing eyes, and smiling lips, announced that there was no cause for commiseration.

Her mother's moans could with difficulty be silenced long enough to allow her daughter to relate the misadventure which led to a predicament which she assured them was of very little importance, for had she not often walked in the rain before? she asked; and did it ever harm her?

Ursule removed her mantle and veil without the least allusion to the damage they had sustained. On the contrary she threw them out of sight, that they might not attract attention. Then she took the bouquets out of the young girl's hands, and examined them with admiration.

"Did you ever see flowers so perfect?" asked Sylvie, delightedly.

"They are beautiful—very beautiful—they are hot-house plants—but I have seen all these flowers before—years, years ago!" and the old maid sighed at some sad recollection conjured up by the sight of the lovely exotics. But quickly chasing away the intruding memory, she relinquished the flowers, exclaiming, "My dear Sylvie, you must take off those wet clothes instantly, and go to bed. Come, I will undress you."

Sylvie was not inclined to retire. She would much rather have lingered to enjoy her father's raptures, and comfort her mother, whose lamentations at the prospect of her daughter's taking cold were loud and long. But Ursule knew that, if that threatening calamity *could* be averted, it could only be through immediate care, and she would not consent to a moment's delay.

In less than half an hour the ivy wreath lay upon the tributary bouquets, which had been carefully placed in water, and the head those shining leaves had encircled reposed upon its unluxurious pillow, and Sylvie's bright eyes were closed in gentle sleep, while upon her lips the happy smile still lingered.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

# NOT AS OUR WAYS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"All His ways are in mercy," said the minister. "Do not forget that, my sister."

They were the parting sentences of one who had often tried, in the sunny days of Mrs. Fielding's life, to lift her thoughts above the outer world into a consciousness of those higher and purer things from which abiding happiness comes. Yet until now, he had spoken to sealed ears. Until now! Ah, the sunshine had gone from her sky. It was night with Mrs. Fielding; dark and silent night: for sorrow and trouble had found her out. But in the stillness of this night, the sound of voices, speaking from an inner world, had power to reach her ears. These were angel-voices, and at first she only felt their tenderness and sweetness without any clear consciousness of meaning in their utterances.

Less than one year before, Mrs. Fielding was a wife and mother; now she was widowed and childless. Then she had a home, in which every comfort for natural life was provided; now, she was in the home of another, and dependent. No wonder the truth that all of God's ways are in love and mercy, was afar off from her perceptions, and but dimly seen. She was of those who tenderly love children. In her own babes, her very life had rested; rested in such overweening tenderness, that weak indulgence took the place of a wise maternal discipline. She could not bear to cross their natural desires in any thing; even though reason told her that it was essential to their higher good. Better for them the wiser ministrations of angels in the heaven of innocence, than the weak compliances of an over fond mother. They were safe; and she sorrowing for their loss as one without hope. Widowed and childless! Ah, the night was very dark around the mourner!

Mrs. Fielding had an active, independent mind. As her bowed spirit lifted itself, feebly, under the weight which had at first crushed her to the earth, and she began to realize her new position and relation to the world, thought turned in all directions searching for the right way. She could not sit down, with folded hands, and become a burdensome drone; pride, if no higher impulse, would have forbidden that. But like far too many young ladies, whose parents expend large sums on their education, she had closed her school-girl days without a thorough knowledge of any one of the branches to which she had given attention. She had a clear, intelligent mind, and was regarded as a well educated woman; but her education was not of the kind to fit her for the duties of a teacher. She was not well grounded in English; nor in French, Italian, or German, though she had attempted the acquirement of these languages under competent instructors. For music, she had no taste; and though she played tolerably well at the time of her marriage, her skill soon left her for want of practice. Tenderly she loved children, as we have said; and this love led her thoughts out towards them in her questioning as to the future; and she was beginning to think of a school for little ones. "I can teach them," she said. And of this it had come into her thought to speak several times. But, the way did not look clear before her yet.

"All his ways are in mercy." She was still dwelling upon what the minister had said, and trying to see how affliction and poverty could be in mercy to her, when a friend who had drawn very near since her days of darkness began, came in.

"It must be so," Mrs. Fielding said, referring to the minister's words, "and yet, in coming down to my own case, doubt arises. In my heart I cannot accept this faith."

"The time is not yet, but it will come," answered the friend, "for it is a true faith. God's ways are not as our ways, especially not as our ways in regard to the individual alone. Good is always the end of God's providences; not good to you or to me only, in the dispensations that reach us, but good, as well, to all who can in any way be affected through our lives. Did you ever think of that?"

Mrs. Fielding's countenance showed a newly awakening interest. "The thought, as you present it," she said, "has never before come into my mind."

"Yet it must be true. Think for a moment. In the Lord's eyes all are equal. He regards you with the same tenderness and care that he regards me, and the children of my neighbor are as precious in his sight as mine."

"Yes, yes. That must be so," assented Mrs. Fielding.

"And He is ever making us the ministers of his good, one towards another, through willing service, if there is love in our hearts; through constraint and the compelling power of circumstances, if our hands are held back, in selfish idleness, from useful ministrations. It is not always for individual discipline alone that sorrows and misfortunes come. Involved therein is the individual's relation to society, and the good to others that will spring from the new life is to be born in him as the old natural and selfish life expires. We are all God's agents, for good, working in our day and generation, and the nearer we draw towards him in self-denial and neighborly love, the higher and more angelic will be the service we render to his children. He has work for you, my dear friend—work for which he has been educating you in these dark days of affliction, and happy will you be when you find this work. The very delight of Heaven is the delight of being useful to others, and just in the degree that a love of serving others for the sake of use comes into our hearts, just so near shall we be to Heaven, and partakers, in that degree, of heavenly happiness.

"How can I be useful?" asked Mrs. Fielding, as her perceptions entered into the thought of her friend; and with perception came an influx of desire.

"May I suggest a way?"

"Yes—yes."

"You know Mrs. Garland?"

"Yes; or, at least, have some knowledge of her. We were not visiting acquaintances."

"She is a light, vain, selfish woman, and completely absorbed in fashionable life."

"So I have understood."

"The mother of three sweet little children, who are given over almost entirely to servants. I was talking, only yesterday, to Mr. Garland's sister about them; and she said, that the neglected condition of his children was a source of deep concern to her brother, who was anxious to get into his family a woman of education, good principles, and Christian regard for duty, who would be to them as a true mother. The thought of you, Mrs. Fielding, came at once into my mind; and I even suggested your name."

"And what was said?" Mrs. Fielding showed considerable interest.

"If *she* will take the place, my brother will be a happy man," was answered.

Mrs. Fielding's breast heaved with a single, long-drawn sigh. Her face grew very sober; her eyes rested on the floor. She sat very still and statue-like.

"Accept the trust, my dear friend! Take these neglected little ones—innocences, precious in God's eyes—and nurture them for heaven; for that heaven where your own sweet babes have found celestial homes and angel-mothers."

In the glow of an unselfish tenderness, that warmed the heart of Mrs. Fielding, she answered, tears brimming in her eyes:

"I will not hold back my feet from the way of duty, if I see it plain before me. God being my helper, I will follow as he may guide. I love children. It is my delight to be with them."

"Shall I make the arrangement for you?" said the friend.

Again the face of Mrs. Fielding was overshadowed by thought. Her eyes drooped to the floor, she sat still and statue-like again. Some natural emotions stirred in her heart, and there was a brief struggle with them for the mastery. When she looked up, a sweet smile was touching her lips, like a sunbeam, and love sat in her serene eyes.

"If I am wanted, I will go," she answered.

"You are wanted!" was the friend's decided answer. "To-morrow I will see you again," she said, as she pressed her hand in parting.

In less than a week there was a change ot both place and state with Mrs. Fielding. From sad, tearful, idle dependence, she moved upwards into a sphere of usefulness, in which her heart became at once interested. Three bright, beautiful, and affectionate little ones were given wholly into her care, by a mother who was daily showing herself to be unworthy of the high and holy trust reposed in her by the Father of all human souls. Soon was transferred the sweetness of that unselfish love of children, which is the mother's highest blessing; passing from a cold and worldly heart to one in which suffering was accomplishing its true work.

Mrs. Fielding, as we have said, was one of those who tenderly love childhood. Towards the babes, who were flesh of her flesh, this love was overshadowed by the weakness of a natural, maternal tenderness, that shrunk from the exercise of needed discipline. Now, she was truer to all perceptions of right and duty. To her own children love had been weak and compliant, but toward these children of her adoption it was clear, strong, and wise as tender.

Five years passed on with Mrs. Fielding, each bringing to her heart new increments of abiding peace. The neglected little ones had been taken at once into her love, and wisdom had prompted this love ever to seek their highest good. They were, in her affections, as though born of her own body. The mother instinct in her nature, had gone fully out to them.

Five years had passed; and, for more than two years, the unworthy mother of these children had been at rest from earthly passion. Her sun went out ere life had touched its fair meridian; and there was not much heart-grief at her loss. So the mere selfish worldlings die. Even those who stand nearest, and whose ties are, or should be, strongest, rarely sorrow as those who refuse to be comforted.

A man of a strong, true, tender nature was Mr. Garland. Life to such an one, bound to a mere worldly, vain, selfish and fashionable woman, is little more than a weary desert. Dutiful, patient, and upright had he been through all the years of an unsatisfying union; and when death closed the compact, he gave tears to the memory of her who had once been dear to him; of her who was the mother of his precious children—and threw a veil over the unhappy past.

Two years had lapsed away since the angel of death drew her from his side. Mrs. Fielding still held her place as the true mother of his children. Her life had become so bound up in their lives—their good so dependent on her ministration—that no thought of separation had intruded.

Is it remarkable that a true man and a true woman, whose daily lives so met in a mutual interest, should be attracted by stronger forces? Is it remarkable that respect, regard, and admiration should take love into their fraternity, and give her the highest place?

"As you are, and have been, for years, their true mother," said Mr. Garland, taking the hand of Mrs. Fielding one evening, as she came back from the apartment where the children slept, to their family sitting-room—he had listened, as he sat alone, to the tender inflections of her voice as she talked with, and read to them; that voice stirring emotion deeper and deeper, like music to which the heart lifts itself in sweet responses. "As you are, and have been, for years, their true mother, will you not be a mother to them in name also?"

He held the hand tightly, and looked into her face. Her eyes, startled at first, dropped away from his, and fell upon the floor. Mr. Garland felt an impulse in her hand, as if she were about to withdraw it, and his, with a responsive impulse, took hold with a firmer clasp.

"The currents of our lives," he said, in his calm, true, earnest voice, "have in God's providence, been for sometime running side by side, taking equally the sunshine and shade, and feeling, almost as one, the rippling breezes. Shall they not flow together? I testify, here, to your dignified, womanly conduct in every relation in my home. You have been true to yourself and your sex in all things. So true, that from respect and admiration, a deeper and tenderer feeling towards you has been born. I say this frankly. And now, Mrs. Fielding, how stands the case? Shall our lives flow together as a single stream. It is for you to say."

For more than a minute Mrs. Fielding stood, looks downcast and breath indrawn to an almost imperceptible respiration. When she raised her eyes, slowly, they were wet with blinding tears, and her lips had an irrepressible quiver; but Mr. Garland saw light shining through the tears, and consent on her trembling inarticulate lips. He led her to a seat.

"I have not sought this, Mr. Garland—heaven be my witness——" Her delicate woman's nature shrunk.

"And I am also your witness, dear, true, right-hearted friend, whom God—His ways are not as our ways—has so kindly led to my side! Be nearer and dearer to me than a friend; that is, if in your heart you can draw nearer. I do not want the hand I hold unless all that can bless a man goes with it."

And the blessing was his.

How sweetly, purely, and tranquilly flowed their stream of life, full to the grassy and flower-decked brim! A true man and a true woman, with high aims and heaven-rising aspirations, walked onward side by side in duty and love, and not a heart-throb beat in discord. Could an idle, sorrowing, self-afflicting life have so crowned the years of Mrs. Fielding with blessing? It is only along the path of usefulness that the Lord can lead to life's best fruitions here, and the happiness of heaven hereafter.

# LEONARD CLAIBORNE.

## THE VICTIM OF POPULAR CONVICTION.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Leonard Claiborne, the descendant of an ancient Scottish family, was the last of his race. His forefathers emigrated to this continent in the later years of the seventeenth century, and established themselves in what has since become a flourishing New England town.

The Claibornes were a studious family, not as shrewd and wise in money-getting as many of their compeers, indeed caring little for the dross that perisheth in comparison with that better wealth dug from the mines of learning. So, while their neighbors—shrewd, and industrious, and calculating—grew richer and richer, generation by generation, they grew poorer and poorer from father to son, so that when Leonard's father died he left to his infant son and the widowed mother only a tiny cottage, half filled with books, and sufficient means to keep off the encroachments of actual poverty.

Leonard Claiborne was a student like his father, and further endowed with an intense love of the beautiful, and a glowing imagination, that developed themselves in poetry and pictorial art almost ere he passed the confines of childhood.

As he grew toward manhood he lost nothing of his admiration of the beautiful, while for Katherine Grahame, the daughter of the "minister," his friend and tutor, admiration grew to love. The joy of acquiring knowledge had always been heightened by the privilege of gaining it in her society, and by the time Leonard had reached the age of seventeen, even his book, or drawing, would have been distasteful had she not shared the task.

When Katherine was seventeen, and he near eighteen, they were formally betrothed, with the consent of their parents.

An ardent, youthful love, like the mantle of charity, conceals all defects of the beloved object. Leonard had never dreamed that Katherine was vain, and giddy, and fond of admiration. He had never suspected that she could desire the suffrages of others, and he left her to go to college, as confident of her constancy and fidelity as he was of his own.

But Katherine, who had always been treated as a child in the parsonage, suddenly assumed the airs of womanhood upon her betrothal. She had greater liberty, and her fellow-student having gone, her father ceased to require of her the usual attendance upon lessons. She walked about the village streets, gossipped and visited, rambled outside the town with youthful acquaintances, enjoying her freedom and feeding her vanity on the admiration everywhere accorded to her beauty.

I think that Katherine Grahame really loved Leonard as much as so light a nature can love, for she welcomed him home at vacation with a joyous enthusiasm. But Leonard soon found that he was to enjoy only such scraps and chance portions of Katharine's society as were left from the demands of the associates she had drawn around her in his absence. At this he gravely remonstrated, whereat she pouted, then smiled, and promised until he was more than satisfied; but when, after a week's observation, he ventured to object to some of her new companions, his remarks were received unkindly, and he soon found that not only would Katherine brook no interference in her affairs, but that she flirted and walked with the obnoxious individuals far more than she had previously. Leonard could only watch and sigh, and the vacation in which he had anticipated so much pleasure, bade fair to prove only a season of torment.

A few more days passed on, and then, with the approach of evening, a thrill of horror ran through the whole community at the tidings that Katherine Grahame had been found murdered in a field just beyond the village boundaries and bordered by a wood sometimes frequented by sportsmen. At first it was supposed by all but those who saw her remains that her death had been the result of an accident, as it had been caused by a gunshot wound. But those who discovered her discovered also the evidence of a fearful struggle near the spot where she lay, and in her torn garments, and the dark mark of fingers upon the white surface of her throat. Who could have committed this fearful crime? was the question that, looking terror-stricken into each other's faces, men asked that night; but with the morning tidings spread that Leonard Claiborne had been arrested charged with the murder, and that the bullet extracted from the death wound fitted the gun with which he had spent part of the previous day in the woods.

It was known that he had disapproved of her conduct, that he had even remonstrated with her, and that, on the morning of her death, they had had a short but evidently angry discussion on the village street, in which she had been heard to forbid his coming to her until evening; but it was forgotten how light and giddy her manners had been, and the village mind settled down to the conviction of Leonard's guilt with scarce a misgiving.

And so the poor youth languished in jail until the fall term of the court at which he was to be tried, and no voice was lifted to declare a belief in his innocence save those of his mother and the father of the murdered girl.

After long deliberation by the jury, the verdict was for acquittal, which was received by the audience with a howl of indignation; and the night following a mob came and razed the little cottage to the ground, destroying the costly books and instruments, burning the furniture, and searching, with yells of execration, for the culprit. But he and his mother had escaped, warned by some friend, in time. The next day, in disguise, they left their native town, and in new scenes, amidst poverty and sorrow, commenced the struggle of life. But he was not doomed to live forever under this dark cloud of suspicion. At last a newspaper article reached him, that showed him that at last the real murderer had been discovered. A man died in one of our large cities, leaving, as the last conscious act of his life, an attested confession of the crime of which Leonard Claiborne had been accused. A wandering sportsman—a reckless, evil fellow in his youth, he had seen the beautiful Kate walking alone in the field. He had accosted her with insult, struggled with her when she tried to escape, and then, as she finally released herself from him, had raised his gun and sent the unerring bullet to her brain; thus cutting off all possibility of the crime being charged to him. He fled immediately, escaped from the country, and died at last, ignorant that another had suffered for his guilt, but prompted by remorse to make the confession.

Leonard took a journey to the city, verified the confession, and then came to his native place. Here he established his innocence, and having declared his intention of residing here, was persuaded to prepare himself for the ministry, and fill the place of the venerable parent of Katherine.

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It is curious with what moral fortitude men can bear with the misfortunes of others.

## 'TIS ALWAYS GOOD TO PRAY.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

"Oh, sister," little Lucy cried,
"What are you doing there?
This is not Sunday—yet I see
You are engaged in prayer;
Oh, come get up, and let me romp,
And in the garden play;
To-morrow will be Sunday, sis,
And then I'll let you pray."

"Oh, sister dear, oh, sister dear,"
Said sweet young Rosabel;
"Must Sunday be the only day
In which our praises swell;
For, oh, we would feel very sad,
Who fall in sin each day:
If we were forced to wait and sigh
Till Sunday comes, to pray.

"Whene'er we feel that we have sinn'd,
And blinding tears arise;
When we would wish our Saviour's hand
To wipe our weeping eyes;
No matter, sister, when it be,
Or what the hour of day;
But when we feel we need our God,
*'Tis always good to pray.*"

Then in the silence of that room,
Those sisters bright and fair;
Knelt down, and breathed in penitence,
A heartfelt, fervent prayer;
While angels, on their shining wings,
To Heavenly courts above,
Bore up their words of trustfulness,
Unto a God of Love.

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# THE ARTIST'S CORNELIA.

## A STORY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Egbert Purcell sat in his studio. He was five-and-twenty years of age, slight of frame, with a broad, high brow, back from which flowed wavy masses of golden hair. His eyes, which were large and brilliant, were of a grayish blue, and his face, a pure oval in form, was made up after the highest standard of intellectual beauty. There was an unfinished picture upon the easel, and about the room were a variety of sketches and fragmentary pieces of dingy statuettes. Some of these sketches betrayed the hand of a finished artist, and there were touches of exquisite grace and beauty. Yet there was nothing elaborate about the pictures exposed to view. If the artist had painted anything of the kind—if he had pictures completed for the frame—they were among those canvases set up around the apartment, with their faces to the wall. It was now near the middle of the forenoon, and yet the painter showed no disposition for work. He reclined in his great easy chair, with a robe of Genoa velvet drawn closely about him, and with his brow resting upon his hand. Ever and anon he would cast his eyes up at the unfinished picture upon the easel, and then sigh heavily. What was it that moved him so?

He had come to that suburban village two years ago, engaging board with a private family, and furnishing a studio in a quiet place, where the din of the great thoroughfare could not disturb him. People knew that he was a mild, gentlemanly, handsome youth, but where he came from, or where he belonged, they did not know. Some of the curious ones had tried to pry into the secrets of his life, but they gained nothing by the attempt. Some said he was an American by birth, while others declared that he was a foreigner; they had seen books printed in strange languages in his room, and the sound of his words in conversation was not of the pure English stamp. And some said he was proud. They had been there to have their portraits painted, and he would not do it, or if he would, his prices were so enormous that no one could afford to have them done.

As Egbert sat there in his chair, becoming more and more absorbed in the reflections that were crowding upon him, a light step sounded upon the stairs, and presently there came a rap upon the door, which he arose to answer. He seemed to recognize that step, for he started when he heard it, and the emotions which sent their shadows across his face were not such as could have resulted from an ordinary interruption.

It was a female who entered—a maiden, in the bloom of youth, with the flush of some twenty summers upon her dimpled cheek; and as she removed her shawl and bonnet, and the rich, dark tresses fell over her neck and shoulders, she seemed almost a fairy presence in that abode of art.

"I hope I have not broken in upon a moment too valuable," she said, with a bright smile playing around the corners of her mouth, and circling the dimples of her cheeks and chin. "I hope you've been studying for a good, large picture. I do long to see you paint one."

"I may do so one of these days. There—now for your tree. Remember what I told you. The great secret of painting foliage is, to know when it is done. A very few touches are sufficient, if properly put on; and, if not properly put on, much work won't help it. Hold. Ah—that is good. You are progressing, Emma. You handle the brush with both freedom and delicacy—two great qualities in painting. Now for the shadows."

And thus the artist went on with his lesson to the fair pupil. Sometimes he went to the window and looked out upon the landscape of lakelet and hillside; and then he came back and overlooked the movements of the small, white hand that carried the brush. As he gazed upon the lovely face—just turned so that he could command a view of the long, drooping lashes, over the rounding of the rich cheek—he pressed his hand upon his bosom, and a cloud swept across his brow.

Emma Gifford was an orphan. Her father died when she was an infant, and her mother followed not many years afterwards. Emma was left with a maiden aunt, with whom she had resided, and with whom she had lived on the best of terms. From her mother she had inherited property to the amount of some ten or twelve thousand dollars, of which she had now undisputed control. So Emma was an heiress, on a moderate scale, and many were the swains who had looked with longing eyes upon her personal charms, and also upon her little fortune; but none of them had found favor with her. About a year before the opening of our story, she had taken a fancy to learn to paint. She already understood the art of drawing and she wished to pursue the study in the higher sphere. For this purpose she applied to Egbert Purcell, and he willingly lent her the aid she sought. So she had been his pupil now for a twelvemonth; and, as she saw the pictured beauties which grew up beneath her pencil, she regretted not the time and pains she had spent.

Finally the lesson was done, and Emma turned from the easel. Egbert walked to the window and came back again.

"There," she said, "one more lesson will finish that picture. O, I am so anxious; for, you know, I am next to paint a Madonna. O—you needn't shake your head, for you promised me."

"But you must remember, Emma, that all human promises are made under the condition of human liabilities. I'm afraid we sha'n't reach the Madonna. However, I can give you one to copy."

What did he mean? Why did he speak so strangely? What meant that deep tremor in his voice and the sudden pallor of the nether lip?

"How!" cried Emma, speaking so quickly that she did not think of the emotion her tell-tale face was betraying. "Do you mean that you can give me no more lessons?—that you are——"

"Going away," said Egbert, finishing out the sentence.

"But not for a long time? You are coming back again?"

"I don't know," returned the artist. "I may come back at some time."

For the first time Emma seemed to realize that she was betraying a great deal of emotion, and she made an effort to control herself. Egbert saw it, and after a moment's hesitation, he took a seat, and continued, in a low, tremulous tone:

"I cannot remain here. There is no inducement for the prosecution of my art. To you I may say what I would not to another, lest it should sound vain and boastful. But, I am not appreciated. I have no NAME to give my works. I have painted some things that were good; but I cannot paint to compete with the flood of cheap pictures which are brought hither from the attics of Paris."

"But," said Emma, without looking up, and speaking scarcely above a whisper, "you can make a living here?"

"A living—yes. Because I confine my expenses to my means."

"And," she ventured, "in time you might make a Name?"

"In time—yes. But in how long a time?" The artist shook his head slowly and sadly as he added, "I must return to Italy. I have friends there."

"And have you no friends here?"

Egbert started. The blood mounted to his cheeks, and then flowed back again.

"Yes, Emma—a few."

"This is your native land, too?"

"Yes—I was born here; but I can hardly call America my home." He looked up as he spoke, and saw that Emma's brow was bent, and that she was trembling. Presently she raised her head, and their gaze met. There was something in the light of her dark eye that sent a quick throb to his heart, and called the flush once more to his cheek. It was something that had an electric power, and it loosened his lips to the utterance of words which he had resolved not to speak.

It did not take long for those two loving hearts to come to an understanding. And Egbert, holding Emma's hands in his, exclaimed:

"Emma, do you mean what you say?"

"Did you mean what you said, Egbert?"

"From the very depths of my soul."

"And I believed you," returned the maiden, with noble frankness. "I believed that you spoke truly, and I answered you from my heart."

"But, dearest Emma!" he exclaimed, seizing her hand, and pressing it to his lips. He stopped—he struggled for a moment with the whelming emotion—and then moved back.

"Emma," he said, with forced calmness, "we certainly cannot misunderstand each other. I do love you—love you with my whole heart, and soul, and strength, and you make me believe that my love is returned."

"I seek not to hide it," she replied.

"O, I had not looked for this. With all my hopes, I had not dared to hope so much. And yet I must be just. The very love I bear for you calls me away."

"Will you not strive here a little longer? There may be hopes not yet dawned upon you. I just think of one. You know Caroline Howard?—we call her Lady Caroline."

"I think I never saw her, but I have heard of her. She is very wealthy?"

"Yes," resumed Emma, "she is very wealthy, and she is very good. Among the poor and suffering she is an angel of mercy. The recipients of her bounty called her Lady, and we have all followed the example. She told me, only a few days ago, that she wanted a picture painted, and she asked me if you could paint ideal heads. I told her yes. O, I told her how beautifully you could paint them! And then she said that she must see you. Wait, Egbert, and paint for her. She has influence and taste. If you please her, she may help you to that NAME you so much desire."

"If she seeks my professional services——" commenced the painter, with some hesitation.

"Ah," interrupted Emma, with a shake of the finger, "you must not run into that mood. She has not the remotest idea of rendering any assistance to you. She rather feels that you will be the favoring party; as, from her remarks, I should judge that she wanted the picture very much. You will remain?"

"Till I have painted Lady Caroline's picture."

On the very next day, while Egbert was busy at his easel over a little sketch which he had commenced for the mere purpose of occupying his mind, some one rapped at his door. He answered the summons, and found a lady in waiting, whom he politely introduced into his studio. She possessed both a form and face of exquisite grace and beauty; and the artist at once made up his mind that this must be the Lady Caroline of whom he had heard. It may have been ungentlemanly—but, for the life of him, Egbert could not help gazing a second time into that face. There was something in its soft, pensive loveliness—in the halo that seemed to surround it, and in the strange purity of its faultless mould, that fairly entranced him. She was young, but not youthful. She might have passed for five-and-twenty, though she must have been nearer thirty. But the rolling years had only deposited new gems upon her brow, and touched with deeper beauty the soft light of her mild blue eyes.

"Mr. Purcell, I think?" she said, in a sweet, musical tone.

"At your service, lady," he replied, with a bow.

She took a seat, and introduced her business. She had been recommended to him, and would like to have him paint for her a picture of Cornelia, the "*Mother of the Gracchi.*"

"I have always felt a deep admiration of the character of that noble Roman mother," she said; "and I have wondered if her features could not be put upon canvas, to keep company with the pictured saints and matrons of Christendom. I would have her taken as she must have looked when she exhibited to the Campanian lady her household jewels. This may be a strange fancy of mine, sir; but I hope it may strike you favorably."

The artist considered upon it, and finally concluded to undertake the task.

"However," he added, after he had signified this much, "I shall paint it, as of course I must, after my own fancy; and, when it is done, if it suits you not, you need not take it."

"That would be hardly fair," said the lady, with a smile. "But still, we may think of that, if you please, when the work is done."

Some further conversation was held upon the subject of the picture; and if Egbert regarded his fair visitor with an unwonted interest, she seemed to be no less intent upon him. In short, had Emma Gifford witnessed the eager glances which gleamed from out those deep blue eyes, upon the handsome artist, she might have been sorry that she had ever recommended him so highly. Aye—and more:—Had she seen the earnest look which her confessed lover bestowed upon the beautiful lady, she might have had still nearer cause of fear.

Lady Caroline went away, and Egbert was left alone in his studio. And did he give his attention at once to the Cornelia he was to paint? Ah, no,—he thought more of the Caroline for whom he was to paint. It was strange how the fair presence haunted him.

And how was it with Caroline Howard. Did she still bear uppermost in her mind the fancied image of the Roman Mother? No, no. Her maid, when she retired to her chamber for the night, heard her repeating the name of the youthful artist!

Egbert had sketched the outlines for a female head; but how should he fill it up with a face? He had painted Madonnas, and Cleopatras, and Berenices; but this must be something more. The ROMAN MOTHER! A day and a night, and another day, and still the face was not ready for the canvas. Another night, and Morpheus came to his aid. From the realms of dreamland there came a face smiling upon him so sweetly in its maternal grace and purity, that he caught it as an inspiration from Heaven. And was this Morphean presence altogether new? No, or he might have lost it. No—it seemed the calling back of some spirit presence, which had dwelt in his soul before.

On the morrow he began to work; and the face, as he bore it in his mind, grew, line after line, and feature after feature, upon his canvas. He did not ask himself if the daughter of Scipio Africanus Major, and the mother of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, had golden hair and blue eyes,—he gave them to her without a question. He forgot that the wife of Sempronius Gracchus was a proud dame, with a strong, masculine intellect. He forgot that she bore the loss of her husband and her children with a fortitude that bent not the noble sweep of her brow. He must have forgotten it; for he painted his Cornelia with an expression of such pathetic tenderness and pensive sadness as the face of the Roman matron could hardly have worn. There was a melancholy sweetness in the subdued light of the soft blue eye, and a tone of heavenly resignation in the lips which seemed almost motive with life, belonging to the Christian saint, rather than to the mother of Roman soldiers. O, with what fondness the artist dwelt over that picture. It was not altogether a fondness of the art; nor was it wholly a fondness for the simple painting which had grown to be almost a thing of life beneath the magic touch of his pencil. No,—it was something more—something deeper than all this—something which lay away down in the depths of his heart, hinged upon the holiest recollections of his earliest childhood.

After the lapse of some weeks, Lady Caroline came to see if her picture was done. She found the artist alone in his studio; and upon the easel, whither she instinctively cast her eyes, she saw something which appeared to be a large canvas, with a curtain thrown over it. She took a seat, and presently asked if the Cornelia was painted.

"Ah, lady," replied Egbert, with a shake of the head, "I fear that I must disappoint you."

"Have you not painted it?"

"I have painted, but not what would suit you for a Cornelia. As I approached the features, my own fancy ran away with history, and the canvas bears only a simple form, which, for its worth, must look to the soul of him who painted it. Perhaps I could paint you another."

"But, sir—let me see the picture."

"It would not suit you. I should not dare to trust it to your criticism. You would fail to recognize the least characteristic which could properly belong to the mother of the Gracchi."

"Still, Mr. Purcell, you will not refuse to let me see it. I may, at least, witness the hand of the painter."

Egbert could not resist that appeal.

"Mind," he said, "you will view it only as a work of art—an ideal of the artist's own brain—and not as a fixed subject. As such I show it you."

As he spoke he drew aside the screen from his easel; and the light, soft and mellow from the curtained window, fell upon the spirit-like creation which had been fixed upon the canvas. Caroline Howard gazed upon it, and a low cry broke from her lips. Gradually her hands were folded reverentially upon her bosom, and a bright tear stole down her cheek.

"What is it?" she whispered. "O, whence came the sitter? Tell me," she added, turning to the artist, "from whose face drew you those lineaments?"

Egbert, who had been wondering at the strange behavior of his visitor, and had been gazing first upon her, and then upon the picture, did not answer until the question had been put a second time.

"It is from no subject of the outer world," he said. "It rests there upon the canvas as it grew to life in my own soul."

"But it is not wholly ideal? It has some counterpart more substantial than mere imagination? Tell me, Mr. Purcell—is it not so?"

Egbert sat down, and bowed his head upon his hand; and in a moment more he felt a trembling touch upon his arm. He looked up, and beheld Caroline Howard standing over him, her whole frame quivering, and her gaze fixed upon him with a depth of intensity that reached to his soul.

"In the name of that which you esteem most holy, I pray you, tell me whence came that picture. I ask from no idle fancy."

She had prevailed. There was a power in her look and tone—a deep, mystic, spiritual power—which he could not resist. He made a motion for her to be seated; and when she had obeyed, he spoke:

"By what magic power you have unlocked the casket of my life's dearest secrets I cannot tell; but you shall know what you have asked. Only, let me make this stipulation: When I have told you, you shall ask no more. Do you agree to this?"

The lady gave an affirmative inclination of the head, and Egbert proceeded. His voice was low and tremulous, and his eye was fixed upon the picture:

"I lost my mother when I was very young—I think I was but four yours old—but her image has never left me. I remember her as the only other thing of life beside myself in those early years. I remember her as something that I loved as I might have loved heaven itself. But—I lost her, and, during the darkness of the years that have followed, I have felt that something like her blessed image, wearing her heavenly smile, has rested upon my heart. I have tried to paint it; but never, till now, have I succeeded. When I sat down to paint the face of the Roman mother, I was lost. I thought of the mother who loved her children—of the mother who might have blessed a son—and, in my dreams, this sweet face was revealed to me. I caught it, and I painted it; and it is the counterpart of the image I have worn next my heart so long—the image of my mother!"

Caroline Howard had listened with eager, breathless attention; and when he stopped, she asked:

"Was your mother's name Purcell?"

"Ah, lady, you promised to ask no more."

"But—one word: Did your mother die when you were so young?"

"Remember your promise," said Egbert, shaking his head.

"Then," resumed the lady, with a sudden change of manner, "since I may ask no more, let me tell a story of my own. Will you grant me that?"

"Yes, and I shall listen to you most attentively."

"Egbert, you may know how deep must be my reason for telling you this, when I assure you that the story hath never yet passed my lips to mortal ears. You will be the first to receive it, and I think I may trust to your honor in all confidence."

The artist replied that she might, and yet he hardly knew how he answered, for he was dwelling too engagedly upon the strange gaze which was fixed upon him by those radiant eyes.

"Listen to me," the lady said. She trembled, and her hands were folded upon her lap, as one might hold them who was about to utter a prayer. "I am eight-and-twenty years of age. When I was two years old I had a little sister born. She lived but a few short days, and then died. When I was almost four, I had a brother. He grew to be a bright-eyed, laughing boy, and I remember how fondly I loved him, and how devotedly he was attached to me. When my brother was four years old there came a cloud upon us, so dark and drear, and so full of storm and tempest, that our joys were all whelmed and swallowed up. My father ran away from us!"——

The speaker paused, and bowed her head, but presently she regained sufficient composure to enable her to speak on:

"My father left us. He went away in company with a wretched woman who had robbed my mother of her husband's love! But this was not all. He took away my little brother with him, and we never saw him again! My mother was almost broken-hearted. But, in time the wound caused by the rending of the marital bond was partially healed, and she obtained a divorce, and resumed her maiden name of Howard. The other wound, however—that which pierced the mother's heart—was not to be overcome. She bore the image of her lost boy in the fondest depths of her memory and love, and prayed earnestly to God that he might be restored to her. Her brother, a wealthy merchant and a bachelor, died, and left to her his whole property, and then she hoped that Heaven would restore her lost darling to her, that she might bless him with her new-found wealth. But her prayers were not to be answered. Five years ago she died. When she lay upon her death-bed, she drew me down upon her pillow, and told me that she left all her property to her CHILDREN, though by her will it came to me, and then she made me promise that if ever I found my brother, I would convey to him the half of her wealth, and bid him take it, and keep it, and use it in memory of his mother's love! And she bid me to tell him more: If the power were given her, in the mystic world to which she was going, she would guide and bless her darling boy in spirit-presence. She died, and I was left alone. She died, and I lost one of the best and noblest of mothers, and society lost one of its most useful and honored members.

"And now, to my entranced gaze, she seems to live again upon that canvas. Egbert, you say that is the image of your mother, as it is fixed in your soul. It is the image, too, of my mother, as I have known and loved her. Now—now—may I ask more?"

"Not yet—not yet," replied the artist, in hurried, impulsive tones. "Let me tell you what I have to tell. I ask no pledge from you, for the same key must unlock the secret chambers of the memory which holds our recollections in store. My father carried me to Italy when I was only four years of age; and he tried to make me think that the woman who went with us would be a mother to me; but I never believed him, for I could not love her. He there took the name of Purcell, and I have borne it ever since. The woman deserted him after a few years, and he gradually failed and sank. On his death-bed he confessed to me the shame that was upon im; and he died, like a weeping child, in my arms. I was left with an old painter, who was kind to me, and who taught me his art. Finally I resolved to visit my native land. Perhaps I might find my mother; and perhaps I might find the sister whom I used to call KATY, and whom my father spoke of in tones of fondest remembrance with his dying breath. But—when I landed here, and remembered the stain which was upon my family name through my father's misfortune, I dared not ask any questions."

"And your family name——"

"Was GRAHAM!"

"And thus," said Caroline, rising from her seat, with her arms open, and the bright tears of a new joy rolling down her cheeks, "is the mystery of my emotions solved."

"Aye," cried Egbert, with the same impulse; "our Cornelia hath two of her children before her."

"And," added Caroline, sinking forward as she spoke, "may our mother look down from heaven and bless us as she joins with us in our joy!"

Emma Gifford, when she came into the studio, and saw her lover, with his head closely pillowed upon the bosom of the Lady Caroline, and she with her arms wound fondly about him, uttered a cry of agony and alarm, and would have staggered back to the wall, had not Egbert sprang forward and sustained her. Sad was she, and miserable, for a moment; but as the light gradually dawned upon her, her sorrow was changed to rejoicing; and when she had heard the whole story, her face was radiant with blessing and with thanksgiving.

"You will yield me up my brother," said Caroline, as she held Emma by the hands, and kissed her.

"Yes,—but you shall yield to me my lover," returned Emma.

"Aye,—and between us both I fancy we shall be able to keep him."

"Fear not on that score," said Egbert, with a bright, happy smile. "My chains are too strong to be broken; and so winsome are they, and so joyous, that I would not break them if I could. No,—I shall stay—for my SISTER and for my WIFE."

"And I shall take the picture," added Caroline.

"Nay," replied her brother. "That would be hardly fair. You ordered a Cornelia, and this is not it." He had spoken in a half playful tone; but as he turned his gaze upon the inspired canvas, tears gathered again in his eyes; and he went to it, and bowed reverentially before it.

In a moment his sister was by his side, and her arm about his neck.

"It is our MOTHER," she said; "and we will carry it to our home; for henceforth that home, which she left for her children, is yours as it is mine."

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AFFECTION, like spring flowers, breaks through the most frozen ground at last; and the heart which seeks but for another heart to make it happy will never seek in vain.

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# WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THERE never was a sadder divorce than that effected between praying and working. People pray for "the increase" when neither Paul has planted nor Apollos watered; they fold their hands in petitions when they ought to be using them in toil; they consider "pray without ceasing" to be a warrant for doing nothing else, and never learn that a useful, toiling life may be a perpetual prayer, as it is a perpetual hymn.

FAME is often a wayward and careless mother to poets while they live, but when they die, she comes and presses her warm lips to their voiceless dead ones, and calls them her poor, dear children, and wreathes their names on her monument with marble flowers, the only ones that grow in her heart.

THE song of the harvest is everywhere. Its notes fall sweetly upon the ear as they float over the land; away there just subsiding, and away there just beginning—and so they will pass the strain along till the music has been wafted round the world.

IT is the vice of the unlearned to suppose that the knowledge of books is of no account, and the vice of scholars to think there is no other knowledge worth having.

AN English writer says that wild and mischievous boys are "apt to make old men." Very bad boys are apt to make prematurely old men of their fathers, if not of themselves.

THE world's master-spirits can make the silence of their closets more beneficial to mankind than all the noise and bustle of courts, senates and camps.

MEN'S native dispositions are most distinctly perceived whilst they are children and when they are dying, as the sun is best seen at his rising and his setting.

PROBABLY the men who can boast the possession of the most varied and numerous gifts are the beggars.

NAVIGATORS on the sea of life, if their voyage is a long one, generally have to scud at last under *bare polls.*

IT has been said that there is a skeleton in every house; certainly in these days every fashionable woman has one *about* her.

THERE is a tendency in all untutored minds, and not in them alone, to consider everything profound that is obscure.

WE cannot exalt the Deity by disparaging the noblest of his creatures, or inspire faith in Him by divesting men of all faith in themselves.

HE who, like an owl, shuts himself up from society and daylight, must expect to be hunted and hooted at like the owl, whenever he chances to appear.

WE should not envy that man's feelings who could see a leaf wither, or a flower fall, without a slight feeling of regret.

MOST men have in their souls no locomotives strong enough to draw a train of thought.

FAST horses win cups by the use of their legs. Fast men lose their legs by the use of cups.

THE hours are very fugacious, but an exemplary husband is careful to keep good ones.

YOU can't rail sin and ignorance out of the world, but it is easy enough to *rail* cattle out of a field.

MANY a man has the public ear, who has forfeited the right to wear his own.

IF you are too fat and would like to fall off, mount a vicious horse.

PEOPLE generally freeze in doubling the Cape, but a lady doubles hers to keep warm.

BE choice in your reading; read no indifferent production—except, perhaps, yourself.

WE don't admire ruffles, but you had better have one to your shirt than to your temper.

THERE is a kind of bow which no man of spirit will return—the bow of condescension.

SUCCESSFUL love takes a load off our hearts and puts it upon our shoulders.

EAGLES fly alone; they are but sheep that always herd together.

WHEN a woman wishes to be very affectionate to her lover, she calls him a naughty man.

HE who is great in defeat is half a conqueror.

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# CURRENT ITEMS.

AN atrocious attempt at murder was made, a short time since, in a stable in the upper part of the city. A messenger from a drygoods store who had brought home a quantity of valuable purchases, was met at the door of the residence by a person whom he supposed was a servant, and who told him to take the package to the stable. On entering the stable, the supposed servant seized the messenger by the throat and attempted to throttle him; but the latter catching the villain's finger between his teeth, bit him so hard that he let go, and the messenger yelling for assistance, his assailant fled.

AN adventurer, pretending to be the principal of a western female seminary, recently engaged a young lady in Lima, N. Y., to "go out with him as a teacher in his institution." The next thing her friends heard of her was that *she* was safe, but that her baggage and the "professor" were missing; nor have they yet been heard from. Young ladies should make diligent inquiries before entrusting themselves or their baggage to the care of a stranger.

A CASE of heart-rending poverty and suffering was recently discovered by a benevolent lady up town. The family, consisting of a mother and four children, had not tasted meat for two months; the mother had often gone out in search of employment without partaking of food at all, as there was not enough for both herself and the children; and finally she became unable to leave her miserable lodgings from weakness occasioned by sheer starvation.

A WILD cat, that escaped from a menagerie in Cincinnati, took up its abode in the basement of a building and proceeded to free it from rats. A German, living near by, supposing the new-comer would like congenial company, one morning put his own cat in the basement, which was heartily welcomed and eat by the wild cat, much to the disgust of the German.

A JERSEY CITY paper says that a little girl living in that place dropped a kernel of corn in her ear several weeks ago, which sprouted a few days since, when a surgeon was called in to remove it. He succeeded in doing so, without much hurting the child, but she has since been a little deaf.

A WOMAN of "respectable appearance," richly dressed, having one hundred and nineteen dollars in gold in her pocket, and speaking several different languages, was found, one Sunday evening not long since, in the main street of St. Louis, in a state of intoxication, singing and shouting like a freed and romping school-girl.

A TROY paper says that eleven persons have broken their legs in that city this winter by slipping and falling on the ice on the sidewalks; that in every case it was the left leg which was broken, and that every limb was fractured a few inches above the ankle.

A YOUNG lady was instantly killed by venturing too near a revolving shaft in a flour mill, at Fort Atkinson, Wis. Her dress catching on the shaft, she was whirled around it with great velocity, and when her body was at last rescued, it was a shapeless mass.

A YOUNG girl in Hartford, supposed to be in vigorous health, one day recently clapped her hands to her forehead, exclaimed, "O, my head!" fell to the floor, and immediately expired. It was found that a blood vessel had been ruptured, and the brain suffused with blood.

THREE young girls living in Boston, were recently convicted of highway robbery, on one of their sex. It seems that they had been "following the highway" for sometime, and had done a pretty fair business in the footpad and robbing lines.

A HARTFORD paper states that beggars have become so daring in that city, that they go into houses in the absence of the head of the family, and intimidate the ladies into giving them alms. A revolver would be a handy thing for a Hartford lady to have in the house.

A YOUNG woman who considered herself quite handsome and was vain of her good looks, on recovering from an attack of the small-pox, which had entirely destroyed her beauty, committed suicide by taking a dose of laudanum.

A YOUNG man named Samuel Beary, in company with a friend, was recently set upon by a gang of rowdies in the street, in St. Louis, and stabbed eight times, the wounds being mortal.

A YOUNG lady in Morgantown, Va., has been confined in an asylum by her friends, she having become insane from the excessive use of tobacco.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1861.

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## ABLE-BODIED LADIES.

Vigor and Grace are akin. The "poetry of motion" is incompatible with flaccid muscles, inelastic sinews, and feeble nerves. It is, therefore, a necessary condition of gracefulness that these important portions of the physique be adequately developed and kept in perfect working order. These ends can only be accomplished by healthy exercise. Accordingly, ladies who wish to shine in the drawing-room, should train their muscles, flex their tendons, and brace their nerves by active exertion in the open air. There is no other way by which they can acquire that easy command of their symmetrical organization (much more perfect than that of man) essential to a truly graceful and dignified deportment. An awkward stoop, and a slouching gait, are the appropriate penalties of indolence, and young ladies who pass their days in lounging on sofas, and in those cradles for big babies called rocking-chairs, are pretty sure to have an excess of the "Grecian bend," an unsteady walk, a tallowy complexion, and the dyspepsia.

It is not requisite that a pretty girl should become an Amazon, in order to avoid these consequences of inertia. She need not box, or fence, or play at single stick, or lift weights after the manner of Dr. Winship. The delicate frame of woman was not intended for such feats. But fair heel-and-toe walking (not *teetering*), riding and skating are exercises in which ladies may profitably indulge. As a substitute for the gymnastic sports by which young gentlemen strengthen their flexors and extensors, a moderate amount of amateur bed-making may be safely recommended as a wholesome and invigorating employment for young ladies. It strengthens the spine and the chest, we believe, while the *see-saw* system curves the one and depresses the other.

Perchance some Lydia Languish, who thinks it interesting to be nerveless and helpless, may consider these remarks impertinent, and insist that men have no right to meddle with such matters. But that would be a mistake. Upon the physical vigor of the mothers of a race depends in no small degree the physical vigor of its men. The matrons of Kentucky in the days of Boone, Daviess and Hardin were generally, we are told, as remarkable for their finely developed forms as for their fortitude and courage. Look at their male descendants. Such broad-shouldered sons of Anak are not to be found elsewhere. Ladies who *doze* through life are not blest with such sons. Able-bodied women are perhaps even more necessary than able-bodied men to the physical perfection of the genus.

## LOVE LETTER DAY.

The Saint who once almost monopolized the mails on the 14th of February, loses something of his ancient prestige every year. Nevertheless, the Valentine business continues to be profitable to certain large stationery houses, and to yield a few dollars per annum to a great number of smaller establishments. In most of the principal cities of the Union, the postmasters find it necessary to employ additional carriers during Valentine week, and these substitutes for the carrier pigeons who formerly bore the special despatches of the Son of Venus, are looked for with no small anxiety by thousands of palpitating young ladies, and youths whose chins are yet unreaped of the razor. Twenty years ago the silk stocking class indulged in Valentines, and the belles of the "upper circles" sometimes received missives enclosing jewelry, watches, lace handkerchiefs, and other valuables. We remember to have seen one of these magnificent billets, the contents of which were valued at five hundred dollars, the Valentine itself presenting a series of superb, illuminated pictures, in which the God of Love figured in a variety of disguises. For some years past, however, Valentines have been eschewed by our ultra fashionable folk, and the very costly styles with expensive stuffing are now obsolete. The masses, who prefer cheap fun to dear sentiment, patronize the humorous and quizzical styles, and the Cupids hid in folded roses, and hearts that expand into jewelry, are not in great demand.

## WINTER OVER THE WATER.

John Bull is quite proud of his winter this year. There was skating on the ornamental water of the public grounds in London before the flakes were an eighth of an inch thick on our Central Park Pond. Nay more, our cousins in the land of fogs have experienced sleighable snow, and royalty has had a ride on runners! Of course they brag of their unwonted weather, and who can blame them? An Englishman sees but one such season in a lifetime. The normal winter condition of the London atmosphere is *fog*; that of its streets, *mud*. The fog is like no other natural exhalation on the face of the earth. It smells and tastes of carburetted hydrogen and sulphur—being so thick and ponderous that the coal smoke from the five hundred thousand chimneys of the metropolis cannot escape through its compacted volume but is beaten down into the streets by its weight. Well might Byron call the great city a simmering, reeking cauldron. The mud is like no other mud. It is as unctuous as animal fat—filthy, tenacious, slippery as "smear case," and altogether abominable. This season, in the place of their usual mephitic vapor overhead, and horrible slimy compost underfoot, the Londoners have actually had a brief visitation of clear sunshine and hard frost!

## A "SCHEME" EXPOSED.

PHILADELPHIA, *Jan. 23rd*, 1861.

MR. BONNER:—*Sir*—Enclosed I send you a circular that was sent me by mail; and as I am a venturesome young man, and in love with a young lady, the inducements set forth rather tempt me to accept them. As I am simply a clerk, with a small salary, the prospect ahead of being married soon seems dubious. But then the idea that so much money can be made seems mixed up in the doubts. Now, as your paper is so much read, and your opinion is so much desired I ask you what would you do if you were in my place.

Yours, most respectfully HARRY C.

[*The "Tempting" Circular.*]

DEAR SIR:—Being desirous of increasing our business for the New Year, we make you the following very liberal offer, believing it will be for our mutual benefit, viz.: If you send us $20, we will send you a package which we have now selected in the enclosed magnificent Lottery, containing 26 tickets and 78 numbers—and should the package fail to draw a prize of not less than Four Thousand Dollars, we will send you another package in our Extra Lottery, free of cost. You are, however, entitled to all the package may draw, whether over or under this sum ($4,000). "You can draw from $200 to $48,000." The only favor we ask of you in return is, that you will show the money, or make it known amongst your friends and acquaintances, that you have drawn this prize from us, as we are desirous of making ourselves known in your neighborhood as "Prize Sellers." The money will be sent you by draft on your nearest bank, by Express, or in any way you may desire it. You will please keep this strictly confidential until after you receive the money, and then we want you to make it generally known. If you do not desire to make this investment yourself, will you hand this to some one in whom you can confide, that you think will favor our views. We want to increase our business, and take this method of doing so, and by this offer you have Two Packages for the small sum of $20. The State Official Drawing will be sent you the day after the Lottery is drawn, with a full written result of the venture. Enclose us $20, at an early day as is possible, to pay the managers for the Package, and it will be sent you by next mail after its receipt. The Extra Package will be sent with the Drawing. You will please let us hear from you soon. Wishing you success in the venture—we are

Confidentially and resp't'y, yours, ——— & ———.

P. S.—All money can be sent by Express—at our risk, or can be sent by mail as you may desire.

From the number of these circulars which we have had sent us by subscribers asking advice, it seems that they are being distributed over the country far and wide. It is also apparent that they are mostly sent to *young men*, who can of course be more easily lured into sending the $20 so earnestly called for, than older and more experienced persons. Our correspondent's remarks in relation to his own finances, hopes, and fears, would probly apply, in substance, to nine-tenths of the struggling young men of the country. They are of course poor; they are ambitious; some are married, some are engaged, and some merely looking vaguely forward to the time when they can afford to fall in love; their incomes are small, and, struggle as they may, the increase of their capital is so painfully slow, as to drive them almost to despair. Just in this nick of time, comes a plausible circular like the above. The risk is only $20, and the chances are great. And then, if the buyer *does* draw a blank, he will get another package of tickets *for nothing*, and have another chance at the $48,000 prize. He risks his twenty dollars and draws a blank; receives his extra package, and draws a prize of $10 or $15 perhaps—just enough to lure him on. And having once tasted of the maddening waters, he plunges deeper and deeper, the "great prize" constantly dancing before his excited vision, and *almost* within his grasp, until he at last resorts to theft or forgery to pay for fresh tickets, in the mad hope of retrieving losses too grievous to be borne. We therefore say to "Harry C.," and to every other young man, "touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing." You will be "taken in," and finally "done for," just as certainly as you have anything at all to do with these people. You ought to know that no man, or company of men, will or *can* give the public anything like a fair chance to draw from $200 to $48,000 for the paltry sum of $20. Suppose a merchant should offer to sell to each of his customers a package of store-cards for $20 that would entitle him to goods amounting to from $200 to $48,000! What would be thought of such a merchant? Would he not be pronounced either a knave or an idiot? Just apply the same tests to these lottery dealers that you would apply to men engaged in honorble and useful trade or business, and abide by the result.

## BAD WEATHER AND WORSE RULERS.

It is not probable that a worse "spell of weather" was ever experienced by mortals, than New Yorkers were recently subjected to. We had snow, rain, hail, sunshine, tempest, freezing, thawing, ice and slush, all in one day. And each of these was of the best or worst kind, while it lasted. The slush was especially stupendous. The vallies in our streets were converted into vast expanses that reminded one of an Arctic navigator's account of hyperborean icefields. All that was wanted to make the thing complete were a few white bears, and here and there an Esquimau, navigating the slush in his canoe. The members of our municipal government looked upon their floundering fellow-citizens complacently, from the windows of the carriages in which they rode at the public expense. (The item of carriage hire is always a large one in the municipal bills). No effort was made to relieve our thoroughfares of this insufferable nuisance, the authorities preferring to leave the whole matter to the working of the elements. They were, in fact, too busily engaged in maturing plans to *plunder* the people, to do anything to promote their comfort. How long is New York to submit to the control of such a nest of vampires?

## GENTLE SHEPHERD TELL ME WHY?

I rise, Mr. Public, with some hesitation (being born to a bonnet, through no fault of mine), to ask a question: *Why is it necessary to sexualize newspapers?* Why cannot an intelligent woman appreciate a paper which commends itself to the perusal of an intelligent man? I don't fancy this Shaker way of seating the sisters on one side of the house, and the brethren on the other. It is my present intention to cross over and take a seat, on this question, with the brethren. Perhaps you will answer that the majority of women are *not* "intelligent." Granting this for the sake of the argument,—though I will say I've found as many male as female fools in my travels,—are these "ladies'" papers and periodicals particularly adapted to the purpose of rendering the dear creatures more intelligent? I trust there's no harm in asking the question. Now, a "Family paper" does not excite my ire; although it is my private opinion that what generally comes recommended as "fit to lay on the family table," had better be *under* it. A family paper, I say, don't irritate me; because it puts my understanding on a level with those of the hats in the house; but when you hand me a regular out and out "ladies' paper," so called, I am very apt to throw up the window for a little fresh air. FANNY FERN.

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CINCINNATI, *Jan.* 12, 1861.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK LEDGER:—*Dear Sir*—My wife and I have had quite a controversy, and we agree to refer to you. It is simply whether cranberries grow on bushes or vines. I have gathered them in York State, and she has in New Jersey. She says vines, and I say bushes. By noticing this in your next edition, you will confer a favor on a reader of your valuable paper.

With much respect, we remain yours truly,

FRANK.

Your wife is right—we hope she always is—cranberries grow on vines. They fully answer the definition of vines, though some very nice scholars—Mr. Bryant, the poet, for one—are always particular to denominate these vines *plants*. We do not think that, strictly speaking, they can be called bushes.

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THE most important principle, perhaps, in life, is to have a pursuit: a useful one, if possible—and, at all events, an innocent one.

# LEISURE HOURS.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

No. Fifteen.

## THE PASSPORT SYSTEM.

The Emperor of the French is fast proving himself not only one of the ablest, but also one of most liberal of Sovereigns. When he acceded to power as Prince President in 1850, under circumstances the most unpropitious to peaceful rule, he showed himself wary, self-possessed, and moderate almost beyond example. Driven by the opposing factions and the need of a strong government, to convert the short-lived republic into a military despotism, he carried the country through that perilous crisis, with probably less of derangement in the quiet routine of affairs, than ever marked a great national revolution. Since the sharp struggle in the streets of Paris, which raised him to the imperial throne, not a drop of blood has been shed in passion or vindictiveness. Elevated to the throne by the *prestige* of his uncle's name, the first step of his foreign policy was to repudiate the cardinal maxim of his uncle's political system, and to seek an alliance with England. Sharing the English jealousy of the advances of Russia in the East, he embarked with Great Britain in the Crimean War, and was with great difficulty prevented by his counsellors, doubtful of his military capacity, from taking the field in person. Satisfied with a partial success in the destruction of Sebastopol, instead of being tempted by it, as the first Napoleon would probably have been, to further conquests, he shows himself to be influenced by the most pacific sentiments. Scarcely have his forces returned from the Crimea, when, Austria, (presuming on her suppression of the Hungarian revolt, and having husbanded her resources, while the other great powers were exhausting themselves in the Crimea) began to play the dictator in Italy. A marvellously vigorous campaign, conducted by the Emperor of the French in person, disclosed in him an instinct for command, which took the place of military education, training and experience, and ranked him at once among great captains. For a second time he checks the march of victory while in full career, and turning from the conquests of war to those of peace, sends for his old friend Cobden, and negociates with him in person, a commercial treaty, in which the traditionary economy of France is abandoned, and the doors thrown wide open to a liberal system of exchanges. The joint military expeditions with England to Syria and China are despatched as incidents that hardly attract attention. All this was done under the severe restrictive *régime* of speech and the press, which has, from time immemorial, prevailed as the vital condition of the absolute governments of the European Continent. Within the past year, the friends of liberal ideas throughout the world have been agreeably surprized by the steps which he has been taking, toward the restoration of a large measure of that civil liberty, which we regard as the life blood of a prosperous nationality. I refer, of course, to the liberty of parliamentary debate in discussing the measures of the government; to the great extension of the freedom of the press; and now lately to the abolition of the passport system, in favor of English, and we presume of course, American travellers. I propose, at this time, to make a few remarks on this last subject.

As passports have not been required to be used in the United States, it has been suggested to me by Mr. Bonner, that the masses in this country—the great constituency of the LEDGER,—have but little knowledge what a *passport* is, and that some information on that subject would be acceptable.

The word Passport is of French origin, (*Passeport*,) and originally signified a permit for persons, effects, and goods to pass the gates of a walled city, which, on the frontier of the European states, form also the entrance to the national territory. As these walled cities are usually garrisoned, at least in time of war, military reasons, as well as those of police or revenue, led to the use of passports. But the jealous policy of the governments required vigilance over the egress as well as the ingress both of subjects and aliens, so that the passport was the requisite permit to leave as well as enter the jurisdiction. Reasons of State extended their use from the frontiers to the principal towns in the interior, till in time of war and at critical political periods, your passport was required to be exhibited at the entrance of every chief city.

These permits or passports were of course issued by the Central Authority of the State, usually the police department. Aliens coming into a foreign country, were required to bring with them passports granted by their own government, and countersigned by the ministers accredited to that government from the countries proposed to be visited. This passport thus issued and countersigned, was *viséd* (that is examined and countersigned,) at the frontier of every country, and inspected at the gate of every walled town on the road. When you arrived at a capital, where you intended to pass some time, it was exchanged by the police for a permission to reside, (*carte de séjour*) and given back when you resumed your travels. It had then to be countersigned by your own minister, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the country where you had been temporarily resident, and by all the foreign ministers of the countries you expected to visit on your further travels. Forty years ago at Paris, it took two or three days very busily employed by yourself and courier, to go through this venture, and get your passport in order. If any reason existed on the part of the government for detaining you, as in the case of Aaron Burr in France, it was done by simply withholding your passport. You were then imprisoned as effectually as within the walls of a fortress. When a foreign minister is about to return home, either on account of impending war or for any other reason, his intention is indicated by applying for his Passports. If for any reason he is dismissed by the government to which he is accredited, it is done by sending him his passport. These expressions are used in this country, and passports are applied for and granted, in such cases, though they are mere forms, not required by any law.

No passports in time of peace were ever required in this country, either on entering or leaving it. It has been free to every one, citizen or foreigner, to go and come as he pleased. It is true that our government has issued passports to its citizens going abroad, not because our own laws required it, but because they were required by foreign governments. The famous alien law of 1798, (one of the causes of the great political revolution which took place two years later in the United States,) though it extended in terms to all aliens, was aimed at the French, with whom we were in a state of war, and was limited to such persons as the President "shall judge dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States, or shall have reasonable grounds to suspect are concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations against the government thereof." Such aliens might be sent out of the country, while those not deemed thus dangerous might receive, on application, a "license" to reside at such place as might be directed. The captains of American vessels, bringing alien passengers, were obliged, on their arrival, to make return of such passengers,—"the names, age, the place of their nativity, the country from which they shall have come, the nation to which they belong and owe allegiance, their occupation and a description of their persons." This famous act passed on the 25th of June, 1798, and expired by its own limitation in two years. It is fortunate for our shipmasters, who carry from one to two hundred thousand passengers in a year, that no such law still exists.

American vessels sailing to foreign countries are required by law to be provided with a *passport*, certifying to their national character; and they were formerly obliged to take a "Mediterranean pass," which, by treaty with the Barbary powers, was to serve as a protection from their corsairs. This humiliating recognition of those contemptible piratical governments has long since ceased. Our seamen are furnished with passports called "Protections," designed to secure them from impressment into the naval service of belligerents, a practice now happily abandoned, by which England formerly placed herself, in this respect, nearly on a level with the Barbary Sea-rovers.

But the untravelled reader will perhaps be gratified to see a specimen of a passport. The following is a copy of one issued from the Department of State in 1815, printed on a modest seven by nine sheet of paper, with a minute wood-cut of the American Eagle at the top of the page.

"To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting: The bearer hereof, Edward Everett, aged twenty one years or thereabout, of the height of five feet eight inches, light complexion, light brown hair, dark eyes, (whose name is here repeated in his own handwriting,) a citizen of the United States of America, having occasion to pass into foreign countries, about his lawful affairs, these are to pray all whom it may concern to permit the said Everett (he demeaning himself well and peaceably), to pass wherever his lawful pursuits may call him, freely and without let or molestation, in going, staying or returning, and to give to him all friendly aid and protection, as these United States would do in the like case.

"In faith whereof, I have caused the seal of the Department of State of the said United States to be hereunto affixed. Done at Washington this first day of April, in the year of our Lord 1815, and of the Independence of these States the thirty-ninth.

[Signed] JAMES MONROE, Secretary of State."

The original of this passport was sealed with the small seal of the Department. Such was the cumbrous wording of a United States Passport in those days. The present form is far more compendious and elegant. Beneath a handsome vignette of the National Arms, and the words "United States of America" in florid capitals, are engraved the following lines:

"To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting: I the undersigned, Secretary of State of the United States of America, hereby request all whom it may concern to permit safely and freely to pass ————, a citizen of the United States, and in case of need to give him all lawful aid and protection.

"Given under my hand and the impression of the seal of the Department of State at the City of Washington, the 29th day of June A. D. 1859, in the 83d year of the Independence of the United States.

[Signed] LEWIS CASS."

In the left margin are blanks for the description of the person of the traveller, under the heads of Age, Stature, Forehead, Eyes, Nose, Mouth, Chin, Hair, Complexion, Face; and a blank for his signature. The Passport copied above is numbered 74,840, the series having commenced on the 4th of March, 1857. This gives an average of more than thirty-two thousand American travellers annually receiving passports from the Department of State!

In 1815, and for several years afterwards, all aliens landing at a port in England were obliged to report themselves at the Custom House, and receive a certificate of arrival; and on reaching London to present themselves at the alien office within a week. These requirements have long since been abrogated.

The passport of Mr. Monroe, above copied, being in English, and not calculated by its very ordinary typographical appearance to make a favorable impression on the Continental police, I was advised to make no further use of it, but to obtain a new passport from our Minister in London, Mr. John Quincy Adams. This was furnished on a neatly printed folio sheet, with a handsomely engraved American Eagle at the top, in the French language, and substantially to the same effect as the passport of General Cass, just given. It is still in my possession, like all the others mentioned in this article, covered with *visés* in Dutch, German, and French.

This Passport served me during a residence of two years and more in Germany, and till it became necessary to obtain a new one on leaving Paris in the spring of 1818, the blank space on the old one being filled up with *visés*. The new one was granted by Mr. Gallatin, at that time our Minister to France. It was not materially different from Mr. Adams's, and served for about a twelvemonth on my travels through Switzerland and Italy. It has fifty-one *visés* upon it, French, Italian, and German.

On starting from Naples for the East, in the spring of 1819, I took a new Passport in Italian from the Consul of the United States for the Two Sicilies, together with a separate Passport from the Marquis di Circello, Minister for Foreign Affairs and charged *ad interim* with the Police Department. Each of these with a few *visés* was of use as far as Corfu; the former was my protection from Constantinople to Paris. At Constantinople, as the United States had no representative, it was deemed expedient to take the Passport of Sir Robert Liston, the British Minister, for the journey by land to London, of which, however, I had no occasion to make use. While in Turkey I had Passports and Firmans of various kinds, in Greek and Turkish, issued by the authority of Ali Pacha of Yanina, of the Vizier governing the Morea, and a firman of almost gigantic dimensions from the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs at Constantinople. On passing from the Danubian Principalities into Transylvania, the passport of our Consul at Naples came again into play.

I have gone into this dry detail, as likely, better than a more general description, to give the reader a distinct idea of the passport system. It cost some time and money, but by taking care at all times to keep your passport properly countersigned, you were pretty safe from any irregular annoyance by the local authorities, particularly if they were courteously requested, in their own language, to take note that you were an American. Indeed I generally availed myself of the opportunity, while the passport was examined at the gates of the interior towns, to have a chat with the officer on guard, and in that way to pick up a little local information. I recollect at the gate of Ulm having a conversation with the officer in command, who had relatives he said in America. That furnished us with common ground for friendly conversation. I asked him how it was possible that an Austrian general, stationed with an army of 30,000 men within such walls as those of Ulm, could surrender the fortress without firing a gun? He looked somewhat distrustfully at me, as it hesitating for a moment whether he might speak his mind to a stranger, and then, without saying a word, made the motion of counting coins from his right hand into his left. It was the general, though no doubt unjust, impression at the time, that General Mack had been bribed by Napoleon.

In time of war, passports are of course a necessary evil. In time of peace, they are occasionally useful in the pursuit of fugitive criminals. They are, at all times, one of the most effective instruments by which the police, under despotic governments, controls the movements of the people. A few remarks on the subject may be found at the commencement of the thirty-ninth number of "the Mount Vernon Papers."

Difficulties sometimes occur at the police-office in foreign countries in making out the personal descriptions. It is said, particularly, that the record of the age of the better part of creation would not always be found to correspond with that of the baptismal certificate. Lord Macaulay once mentioned at my breakfast-table, that when Madame Sontag applied for a passport at the police-office in Paris, the chief, instead of filling out the personal description under the separate heads, gazed a few moments at her with respectful admiration, and drawing a line down the column of particulars, wrote *angélique* (angelical) against them all.

The difficulty, and at length the impossibility, of obtaining passports, except by artifice, was one of the most dreadful weapons in the hands of the French police in the reign of terror. When Louis XVI. and his wretched family attempted their escape from the kingdom in 1791, a passport with feigned names was procured for them, by the Russian Minister Simolin, at the instance of the Comte de Fersen, a gallant young Swedish nobleman, who had devoted himself to their service. The party consisted of the King, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, the young Dauphin, his sister, and Madame de Touzel, their governess. The latter passed as the head of the party under the feigned name of the Baroness Korff of Frankfort, the Queen was disguised as her chambermaid, the King as valet, Madame Elizabeth was a young lady travelling under the protection of the Baroness, the little Dauphin and his sister passed for her children, and three soldiers of the body-guard were dressed as servants. Their passport is connected with an event of such tragic interest, that I am tempted to give it entire, especially as it shows us the form of a French passport at that period of the Revolution. It is given both imperfectly and inaccurately in "the Girondins" of M. Lamartine, who appears also to be ignorant of its having been procured by the Russian Minister. I take it from the official report made to the French Assembly on the 23rd June, 1791.*

"By the King. To all civil and military officers charged with the *surveillance* and maintenance of the public order, in the different departments of the kingdom and to all others whom it concerns, Greeting. We order and command you that you allow freely to pass the Baroness de Korff, going to Frankfort, two children, a maid and a *valet de chambre*, with three servants, without causing or allowing to be caused to them any delay. This passport good for one month only.

Given at Paris, 5th June, 1791.

[Signed] LOUIS.

By the King. [Signed] MONTMORIN."

There is no sadder page in the history of the French revolution, full of woes as it is, than the narrative of this attempt of the King and Queen to escape the guillotine!

While we recognize the liberality of the Emperor of the French in partially abolishing this odious feature of despotic government, let us join in the prayer that it may still remain a stranger in our beloved country, and that till the end of time fellow-citizens may travel from Maine to Texas, and from Virginia to California, without asking leave of police-officers or sentinels.

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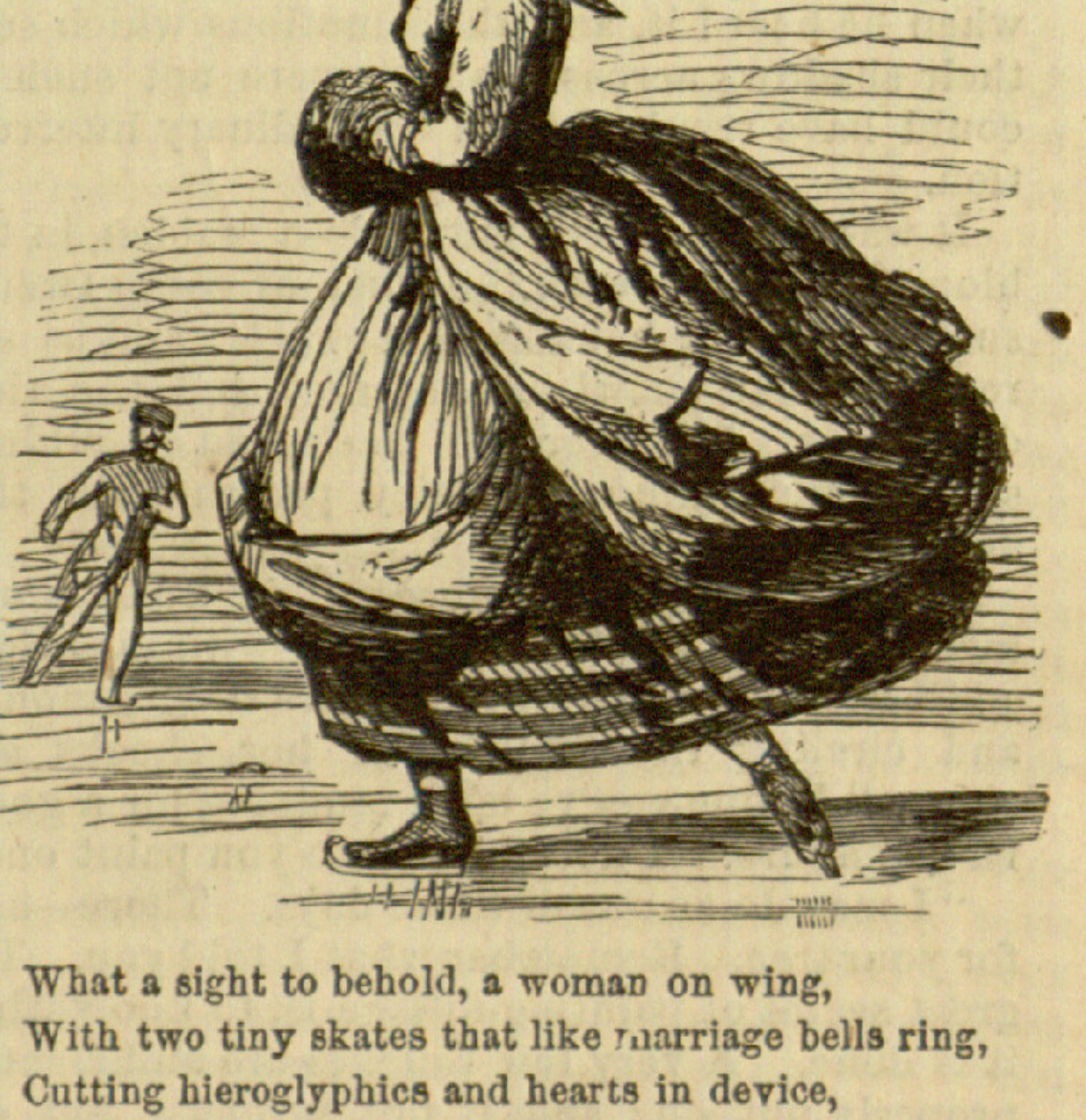
* Choix de Rapports, Opinions, et Discours. Vol. III., p. 127.

## ON ICE.

A modern Adonis went up to the pond,
To witness the feats of a sweet little blonde.
With her balmoral tucked up tidy and nice,
She was poised like a graceful bird on the wing,
For she was indeed the most beautiful thing
On Ice.



What a sight to behold, a woman on wing,
With two tiny skates that like marriage bells ring,
Cutting hieroglyphics and hearts in device,
To kiss her red lips the charmèd wind lifts her veil,
And she slides over hearts on a sliding scale
On Ice.

This gallant Adonis then threw her a kiss,
But the rosy young maid took such freedom amiss,
She there and then sought her dear lover's advice,
Then sulphury adjectives, ending with fool,
Were bandied till blows laid Adonis out cool,
On Ice.

The crust of the treacherous ice was so thin,
That it "scarce" broke his head before it broke in.
He was barely saved once, though he came up twice;
And the *duck* that he got at the pond that day
Was not the dear duck that went skating away
On Ice.

There he caught a bad cold and he died of a cough,
And went to that place where the *Croton's cut off*,
For I fear his morals were not over nice.
He went to that place where no ponds overflow,
But he could not go to that climate, you know,
On Ice.

GEO. W. BUNGAY.

## A REASONABLE BEING.

If there's any thing I hate, it is "a reasonable being." Says the lazy mother to her restless child whom she has imprisoned within doors and whose active mind seeks solutions of passing remarks, "Don't bother, Tommy, do be *reasonable*, and not tease with your questions." Says the husband to his sick or overtasked wife, when she cries from sheer mental or physical exhaustion, "How I hate tears, do be a reasonable being." Says the conservative father to his son, whom he would force into some profession or employment for which nature has utterly disqualified him, "Are you wiser than your father? do be a reasonable being." Says the mother to sweet sixteen whom she would marry to a sixty-five-year old money bag, "Think what a thing it is to have a fine establishment; do be a reasonable being."

As near as I can get at it, to be a reasonable being, is to laugh when your heart aches; it is to give confidence and receive none; it is faithfully to keep your own promises, and never mind such a trifle as having promises broken to you. It is never to have or to promulgate a dissenting opinion. It is either to be born a fool, or in lack of that to become a hypocrite, trying to become a "reasonable being." FANNY FERN.

## MY LITTLE SWEETHEART.

BY ALICE CARY.

Ah! sad are they of whom no poet writes
Nor ever any story-teller hears—
The childless mothers who on lonesome nights
Sit by their fires and weep, having the chores
Done for the day, and time enough to see
All the wide floors
Swept clean of playthings, they as needs must be
Have time enough for tears.

But there are griefs more sad
Than ever any childless mother had—
You know them, who do smother nature's cries
Under poor masks
Of smiling, slow despair—
Who put your white and unadorning hair
Out of your way, and keep at homely tasks
Unblest with any praises of men's eyes,
Till death comes to you with his piteous care
And to unmarriageable beds you go,
Saying, "It is not much—'tis well, if so
We only be made fair
And looks of love await us when we rise."

My cross is not as hard as theirs to bear,
And yet alike to me are storms, or calms:
My life's young joy,
The brown-cheeked farmer-boy,
Who led the daisies with him like his lambs—
Carved his sweet picture on my milking-pail,
And cut my name upon his thrashing-flail,
One day stopped singing at his plough—alas!
Before that summer-time was gone, the grass
Had choked the path which to the sheep-field led,
Where I had watched him tread
So oft on evening's trail—
A shining oat-sheaf balanced on his head,
And nodding to the gale.

Rough wintry weather came, and when it sped,
The emerald wave
Swelling above my little sweetheart's grave,
With such bright, bubbly flowers was set about,
I thought he blew them out,
And so took comfort that he was not dead.

For I was of a rude and ignorant crew,
And hence believed whatever things I saw
Were the expression of a hidden law;
And with a wisdom wiser than I knew
Evoked the simple meanings out of things
By child-like questionings.

And he they named with shudderings of fear
Had never, in his life, been half so near
As when I sat all day with cheeks unkissed,
And listened to the whisper, very low,
That said our love above death's wave of woe,
Was joined together like the seamless mist.

God's yea, and nay,
Are not so far away,
I said, but I can hear them when I please,
Nor could I understand
Their doubting faith, who only touch his hand
Across the blind, bewildering centuries.

And often yet, upon the shining track
Of the old faith, comes back
My childish fancies, never quite subdued,
And when the sunset shuts up in the wood
The whispery sweetness of uncertainty,
And night, with misty locks that loosely drop
About his ears, brings rest, a welcome boon,
Playing his pipe with many a starry stop
That makes a golden snarling in his tune;

I see my little lad
Under the leafy shelter of the boughs,
Driving his noiseless, visionary cows,
Clad in a beauty I alone can see:
Laugh, you, who never had
Your dead come back, but do not take from me
The harmless comfort of my foolish dream,
That these, our mortal eyes,
Which outwardly reflect the earth and skies
Do introvert upon eternity:

And that the shapes you deem
Imaginations, just as clearly fall;
Each from its own divine original,
And through some subtle element of light,
Upon the inward, spiritual eye,
As do the things which round about them lie,
Gross and maternal, on the external sight.

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# MOSES ORAN;

OR,

# "THE BURGLARS' NEST."

BY GEO. CLARENCE BLANCHARD.

### CHAPTER XIX.

A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR!

Mr. Job Tarleton was alone in his dismal law office, bending over his desk, pen in hand, and wearing a face of unusual business-like gravity.

It would have been difficult to recognize in those cold, hard features, any semblance to the gallant beau and admirer of Fanny Van Cleeker. The man of fashion was transformed for the nonce into the practical lawyer. It was a maxim of Job Tarleton's never to allow his pleasures to interfere with his business—a very commendable rule, by the by, if used to a good purpose. But with him interest was paramount to every other consideration. His avaracious spirit was too well known; he was a most exacting creditor, an unrelenting and hard landlord, and unscrupulous and peremptory in enforcing his dues. Yet selfish and cold hearted, he had conceived a most violent attachment for Fanny Van Cleeker, which even the reflection that it was not reciprocated could not lessen or subdue. To marry her he was determined, and as the reader has seen, he had a very fair opportunity of presenting his claims and enforcing their acceptance. The Van Cleeker estate, heavily encumbered, was about to be surrendered, when its owner in his distress applied to Tarleton. The wily lawyer, who never neglected an opportunity of advancing his own interests, readily consented. Mr. Van Cleeker too late saw that he was in the lawyer's power, and struggled vainly in the meshes of the net. Averse to his daughter marrying Tarleton, but was nevertheless intimidated by his threats into coercing her into a marriage he knew must be fatal to her future happiness.

Mr. Tarleton laid down his pen as the image of Fanny Van Cleeker rose before him.

"Humph!" muttered he, "I wonder if this girl's dislike to me is mere prejudice after all? Some favored suitor may be skulking in the back ground. But my little spy shall soon find out, and other things more important. By the way, it's time he was here."

Mr. Tarleton pulled out his watch and having satisfied himself that it wanted half an hour yet of the appointed meeting with Osborne, resumed his labors with fresh assiduity.

At that moment the office door was pushed open, and in stalked a man enveloped in a long cloak and having on a slouched hat. Without the slightest form or ceremony he walked deliberately to a chair and seated himself directly opposite the lawyer.

Mr. Tarleton silently regarded the intruder in blank amazement, who, in no wise abashed, returned the look with the utmost coolness and self possession.

Mr. Tarleton was the first to speak.

"Well sir, your business?"

"My business," returned the cloaked man, "is very important. It concerns——"

"Oh!" interrupted Mr. Tarleton smilingly, supposing he was a client, "I'll listen with great pleasure. Proceed."

The lawyer leaned back in his chair in professional expectancy.

"It concerns," pursued the cloaked man, speaking slowly and carefully, "a certain paper which you have now in your possession."

"A certain paper which I have now in my possession?" repeated Mr. Tarleton in unfeigned surprise. "What do you allude to, sir?"

"I allude to a paper or papers which give you the right to foreclose a mortgage on the Van Cleeker estate!"

"Oh! is that all?" interrupted the lawyer, vainly endeavoring to conceal his surprise. "Well, sir, presuming that I have such a paper as you mention, may I ask in turn your motives for making yourself a third party in a transaction in which you can have no possible interest and concern?"

"My motives," returned the other quietly "are very reasonable and fair. Suppose, for instance, I should say the third party had an interest in the matter."

Mr. Tarleton looked puzzled and angry.

"*You* interested! what interest can you have in *my* concerns, in my client's concerns. How did you obtain possession of these facts?"

"No matter how I obtained them," rejoined the cloaked man with a bitter smile, "it seems they are true, and to prove that I am better informed still, let me ask of you another question: Have you any object in delaying the foreclosing of this mortgage?"

Mr. Tarleton fairly jumped to his feet.

"I, sir, beg your pardon, but——"

Mr. Tarleton's surprise and indignation quite choked his voice.

"Is it not a fact?" queried the cloaked man with aggravating calmness. "Don't get angry, because it might conflict with your interest."

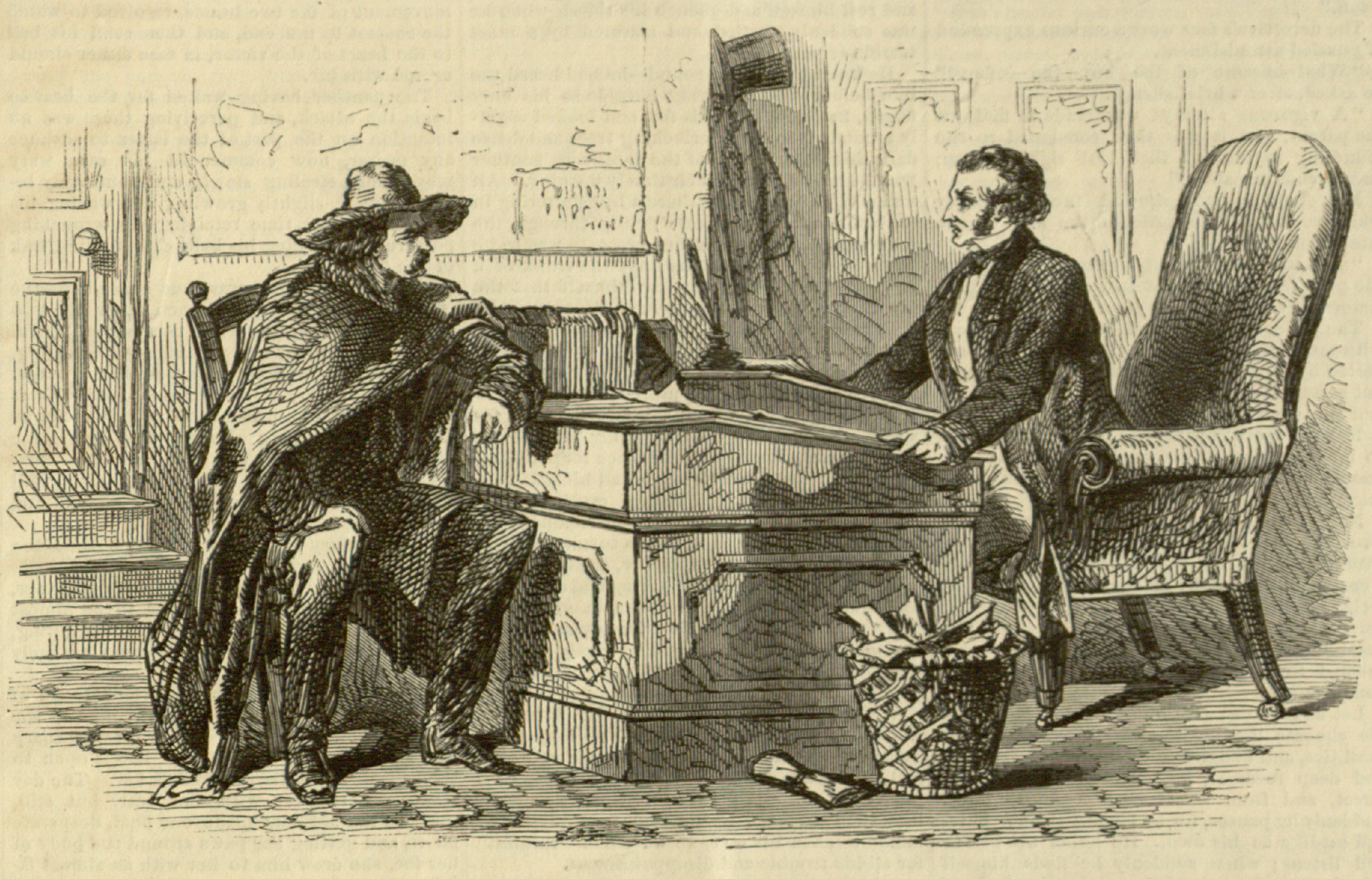
"You are an impudent meddler," said Tarleton, furiously.

"Husband your temper, for the next question may be still more unpleasant. Have you an eye on a certain young lady with a view of forcing her into an iniquitous——"

"Scoundrel!" interrupted Tarleton, excitedly, "how *dare you* come into this office with your base and insulting questions!"

He shook his fist in the face of the upright stature before him. The cloaked man's eye gleamed for a second, but he moved not.

"How dare you," continued the furious lawyer, "attempt to browbeat and bully me?"



JOB TARLETON'S MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

"Go on," returned the cloaked man calmly; "vituperate your fill; such words are air, they signify nothing. Rage, storm and blaspheme if you like, but it does not alter the truth. *Mark me, Job Tarleton*, you shall not abuse the power which you hold, to sacrifice that girl on the altar of your passions!"

At any other time the exasperated lawyer might have thrust him from the office, but those gray eyes had such a strange, terrific gleam, he durst not touch him.

"Who are you, and what is your purpose?" gasped he, with mingled rage and apprehension.

"Who I am, you can never know, but remember this, my power exceeds your own. Unjust dealing shall not prosper."

"Come," said Tarleton threateningly, "what do you mean to insinuate by unjust dealing? The mortgages were assigned to me, and I hold them by rightful possession."

"Very true, but you have no authority to press the matter before 'tis due. When that time arrives, and not till then, have you the power to——"

"Sir," gasped Tarleton, turning livid with rage, "who told you this? I deny it."

"Stop!" said the other, impressively. "Say not that, for you know, as true as you stand there, you have imposed on your good-natured, simple-hearted victim—your cheek turns pale. A guilty conscience tells you you are undone. Suppose this little trick, and others, too, of yours were unveiled to the world—the world you live in; aye, courtly company, rare society; behold the winks, the sneers, the scoffs of those whom we call friends—friends to our fortune and position. Reputation, too, we may not value, but that certain reputation which covers our very flaws, and makes base metal glitter. Lost, all lost!"

Job Tarleton's eyes flashed with concentrated rage; his hand was on a stiletto that he always wore about him, but with a desperate effort he controlled himself, and the cloaked man went on:

"Lost! ah, wretched man, when you find that reputation gone, can wealth retrieve it? It may wear an outside show, but when 'tis——"

"Scoundrel!" interrupted Tarleton, hoarsely, "what is your purpose? Do you threaten me with exposure?"

"Threaten you!" repeated the cloaked man, scornfully. "Must threats drive you to the performance of a right action?"

"I see your aims," rejoined the lawyer, bitterly. "Money is what you are after; gold must purchase silence."

"Job Tarleton," said the figure, with an air of majesty that would have set well on a king, "for once you are mistaken. Your avaricious heart judges man by one standard, but know this: all your gold could not purchase silence!"

"What are your motives, then?" said the lawyer, shrinking back in vague apprehension.

"Know they are good and pure!" returned the cloaked man, sternly. "I have no other object. Do justice to the old man; mercy is the attribute of power. Seek not to force this girl into a shameless match, where neither love nor any redeeming feature approve or sanction it."

Job Tarleton did not reply; a cunning idea suggested itself, and with the quickness of thought he determined to avail himself of it.

"Will you give me time to think of this?"

"Wherefore time to consider?" returned the cloaked man. "You can quickly arrive at a conclusion. The word *expose* is full of pregnant meaning."

"Never mind," replied Tarleton, in a soft, hypocritical tone, which intended to convey an air of penitence; "we will settle it in a manner satisfactory to all parties. I do not wish to push the girl into a match so repugnant to her feelings. The earnestness of my affection for her has caused me to resort to a little artifice."

"Will you release her from your unjust demands?"

The lawyer writhed, and was silent for a moment.

"I will."

"Where's the guarantee?"

"Come this evening and I will give it to you," returned Tarleton, with an oily expression of penitence.

"I might enforce it now," returned the cloaked man, coolly, "but I will give you an opportunity for reflection. What hour say you?"

"I have an engagement that will keep me until ten o'clock. Will eleven suit you?"

As the lawyer said this, an expression flitted across his features that was more like that of a fiend than of a human being.

The cloaked man apparently did not notice it; he rose:

"Well, I shall give you a brief respite; farewell till then." With this he glided out.

"Scoundrel!" muttered the crafty lawyer, shaking his fist at the door as it closed on the mysterious stranger, "you shall never live to repeat your threat."

He fairly gnashed his teeth as he thought over the circumstances; how he could have come in possession of important secrets known, as he supposed, only to himself, he was utterly at loss to comprehend.

As the lawyer pondered on this he resumed his seat, and drew forth a sharp knife, the blade of which he pressed several times against the table, as though to test its suppleness. Having inspected and tried it to his satisfaction, he returned it to its sheath with the same evil expression he had worn a moment before.

Just then Mr. Pump entered, as usual, stumbling and kicking over everything as he approached.

"Eh, Job, ahem! still here?"

"Still here, Pump," replied Mr. Tarleton, carelessly; "full of business, as you see. By the way, did you collect those bills?"

"Ahem! yes. One of them gave me ahem, a deal of trouble."

"The widow, eh?" said Job, with a grin.

"The same," replied Mr. Pump, briefly.

"She set up a bawling, I'll swear to that."

"Very noisy, ahem!" rejoined Mr. Pump; "but the officers did their duty, ahem! just as you desired. Very prompt, ahem! very."

"Glad to hear it," observed Mr. Tarleton, coarsely. "I have been bothered to death with widows. They only think if they put on a long face, and weep after the Rachel style, they'll carry all before them. They needn't expect any sympathy from me."

Mr. Pump gave an approving nod.

"When that young fellow whom I *hired* arrives," continued Mr. Tarleton, significantly, "I wish you would leave the room. You understand me?"

"Very comprehensive, ahem!" replied Mr. Pump. "How many secrets you have, Job, ha, ha, ha! I shouldn't be much surprised, ahem! if there was a woman in the case. not at all, ahem!"

"Hush!" interrupted Mr. Tarleton, "I hear some one coming upstairs; I suppose it must be the boy. You understand your cue?"

Mr. Pump winked his squint eye intelligently, and, the moment Osborne entered, promptly withdrew.

Mr. Tarleton received his supposed emissary very graciously, and having invited him to take a seat, opened to him by gradual and careful degrees his general purposes and instructions. Osborne listened with breathless attention. He was astonished and confounded by the meanness and baseness of the lawyer. Little did the schemer dream of the true character of his companion, as he turned his dark face towards him and whispered in his ear the plot of espionage, which was to bind the old man's fetters more strongly.

### CHAPTER XX.

OSBORNE IN TROUBLE AGAIN.

The startling disclosures revealed by Osborne to the young mistress of the Van Cleeker house, had left her in a very natural flutter of excitement. She still stood in the parlor with glowing cheek and teeth tightly compressed, thinking over the whole, and musing on its probable result.

The contemplated robbery, the baseness of the lawyer, seemed small in comparison with the overwhelming proof of her father's deception. This was the last and most unkind cut of all, and she felt it keenly. Her haughty spirit—the spirit of the Van Cleekers—which had been slumbering so long, was now aroused, and showed itself in her flashing eye and the disdainful curl of her beautiful lip. She had been an humble, obedient, and affectionate child, and this was her reward. To be bartered and sold away to gratify her father's pride; to be deceived, and her feelings trifled with! The reflection was one that drove away every lingering spark of filial affection; and as her thoughts recurred to the noble-minded youth who had pledged himself to rescue her from the hated lawyer's power, she felt a sentiment of gratitude to Heaven for raising her such a friend.

It has been said that one hour of frank interchange of thought is worth a hundred of formal intercourse. The manly sincerity of Osborne's nature seemed to that guileless and inexperienced girl something new, something rare, something congenial with her own disposition.

It seemed as though she had known him a lifetime. She lingered in the parlor in the hope of meeting him again, but as the afternoon waned, and evening approached, she dared not stay longer, but the better to compose her thoughts, went down to the kitchen, where good Mrs. Platt, still at her post of duty, was superintending the getting of supper.

"Dear Fanny," exclaimed that lady, with surprise; "well, I never; how grave you look. Now, as I was observing to your papa the other day, you are becoming quite a woman, and less and less like a girl. The only thing, my dear, you want, is a little history to improve your memory. I am sorry you hate it so, which is very strange, for even James, my dear, has taken a fancy to it, and has read amazingly quick all about the naval battles of Cheronea and Pharsalia, and another engagement which, now I come to remember, was Actium, or some such name."

Fanny faintly smiled at her aunt's enthusiasm. "Alas!" thought she, "how happy she is in her very innocence. Little does she dream of the real state of affairs."

"Fanny, my dear," pursued Mrs. Platt, as she bustled about the kitchen, "what do you think of our new coachman? I am sure James drove the horses very well to-day, and which I must say I did not much expect. He's too handsome for a servant, though he ought not to know that, for it might make him too forward."

How she longed to tell her aunt that the noble-hearted youth was really not a coachman; but she had promised secresy, and worlds could not have persuaded her to reveal what she knew.

"My dear," observed Mrs. Platt, "how singular you do act. You've quite lost all that rattling gaiety you had a week ago, and I'm sure I do not know what to think it, unless Mr. Tarleton has been plaguing you again with his visits, when he isnt wanted, and I really wouldn't mind if I was——"

Mrs. Platt paused, for the sound of scuffling could be heard, apparently proceeding from the basement entrance. The door burst open, and the struggle and pushing was now quite audible.

"Let me go," exclaimed a voice, which Fanny instantly recognized as that of Osborne. She flew towards the door, and by the light of the entry lamp, beheld the youth wrestling with two stout men, who, in spite of their vast preponderance of strength, could hardly master the vigorous, athletic youth.

The young maiden advanced with haughty dignity.

"Pray what does all this mean?"

The two men relinquished their hold of Osbosne. One of them tipped his glazed cap respectfully.

"Sorry to disturb you, Miss," explained he, "but we are acting up to orders. This young villain is your coachman, aint he?"

"He is," replied Fanny, haughtily; "how dare you disturb him?"

"Sorry to do it, Miss," said the other, who was standing quite breathless from the exertion, "nor have we any time to explain," and with this he threw himself again on Osborne, and briskly aided by his companion, secured and handcuffed him.

Fanny uttered a faint shriek. "Oh, what are you doing?" She now saw they were constables.

"This, Miss, is it," said one of them, showing a paper; "we've got a warrant out for his arrest. He's a villain, Miss, associated with burglars."

"He is not," exclaimed Fanny, impetuously, forgetting everything in her earnest desire to save the youth; "he told me the whole story; he is innocent and good."

The two officers looked at each other and indulged in a pleasant wink.

"Miss, you've been deceived," said the first spokesman: "he's a confederate of one of the most dangerous gangs in the commonwealth. We can't stop to explain it, but it will turn up in good time. Come on, Bill!"

"Oh, Osborne," exclaimed Fanny, in an agony of despair, as they conducted him off, "speak and tell them that you are innocent."

"Young lady," said Osborne, with a grateful blush overspreading his face, "I told them so, and they will not believe me. Let them take me to jail. I can prove my innocence. I hardly know how this happened, he added, in an earnest whisper. I didn't know they were officers, or I should not have made any resistance. I hope——"

"Come on," growled the policeman, impatiently jerking him by the arm. Osborne cast an eager parting glance on the lovely girl, and then followed his captors.

Osborne was placed in a hack, and quickly driven off to jail. After a short preliminary examination, in which he declared his innocence, our hero was remanded back to his gloomy cell, where, heavily ironed, he had full leisure to consider the extraordinary events which had thus consigned him within prison walls. But while his mind was perplexed and astonished by the suddenness of this untoward circumstance, his heart beat proudly with the recollection of the sympathy manifested for him by the beautiful mistress of the Van Cleeker house.

He could see her before him even then, her soft, black eyes expressing so much deprecating sorrow. It still thrilled his heart with unspeakable emotions.

What had led to his arrest he could not divine. The thought flashed across his mind that perhaps the burglars themselves had been captured and betrayed him.

Wearied with these and a thousand other thoughts that chased through his brain, he fell asleep, and dreamed of little nymphs in brown challis, and crafty Mr. Tarletons, till they finally dissolved away, and took the form of the Tomtit. The last mentioned personage seemed to be standing over him, gazing with the same expression that he had noticed on his features the eventful evening of his introduction to the Burglars' Nest, and now they seemed to change, and the hard features relaxed, and a look of love, even tenderness, flitted over his rough lineaments. Osborne looked and looked, impelled by some strange fascination. Was he asleep, or really awake? He could not be asleep. Standing over him in reality was the Tomtit, his features, by the light of the lantern, wearing an unusually grim and stern aspect. Osborne uttered a faint exclamation of surprise, which brought the Tomtit's hand over his mouth.

"Young man, not a sound! not a syllable!" whispered the burglar chief, as he stooped down, and with a key released the manacles. "Now, then," he added, in a scarcely inaudible voice, "follow me!" Closing the slide of the lantern, he grasped Osborne tightly by the arm, and groped through a long passage; then he descended the steps, the slide came up, and with another key he unlocked a heavy iron door. Osborne was then conducted through an extensive passage, from which they emerged into the cool air, and without much further delay gained the street. The night was dark and cloudy, and the Tomtit hurried Osborne through the gloomy thoroughfares at a rapidity which somewhat surprised and bewildered him. The walk was, however, not a long one. The Tomtit paused before a little gateway, in the suburban portion of the city, and rapped three times. The summons was answered by a low whistle, whereupon the Tomtit responded in a satisfactory manner, and they were quietly admitted. Up a flight of steps, through a narrow passage, thence another ascension, and Osborne was introduced into a large room, where the whole gang were assembled. The Tomtit did not enter.

In one second all rose to their feet, and greeted him with uproarious delight.

"Vy, little Tomtit!" exclaimed Mr. Slinger, surveying him at arm's length, with a grin of satisfaction, "vere 'av you come from?"

Osborne felt constrained to act out his part. He related the story of his capture, and subsequent adventures, in so lively and piquant a style, that his auditors were breathless with interest and excitement.

"Vell," remarked Mr. Slinger, after our hero had concluded, "s'pose you don't know vot a time we've had."

"It wos a werry bad pull up," observed Mr. Molecat, with a professional sigh; "arter all our pains, gettin' you in the old cove's 'ouse, not saying nothing about a werry conwenient and comfortable pigeon 'ole for the vinter."

"Ven I think 'ow it, it makes me feel werry bad!" groaned Mr. Slinger, with a vivid recollection of the detective's visit; "and may be it might 'ave been worse. Vinker's the vun to blame."

That gentleman, who lay stretched on a bench, gave an audible groan.

"No vunder your conscience bothers you," observed Mr. Slinger, "ven you think of the mischiefs done! Vusn't the Tomtit mad."

"I tell you wot, Pluck," put in Mr. Snag, "some on us wos so werry kind as to insinuate that you had been playing us false, but the beaks nabbed you just in time to save your bacon. I told Slinger he didn't know you."

"Have you found out who was the informer?" inquired Osborne, who was curious to learn the circumstances.

"That's vot all on us vonts to know," rejoined Mr. Slinger, puffing thoughtfully at his cigar. "Some on us thinks it vos the detective." Mr. Slinger, after giving a characteristic account of the descent of the police on his house, proceeded: "It looked werry much like the detective. Snag fixed 'im—laid 'im up werry comfortably."

"Right there," said Mr. Snag, nodding his head complacently. "I think Duffy 'll take no more visits to the 'Nest.' He's wot I call a werry still case."

"Killed him, then?" inquired Osborne, with an inward shudder.

"Pluck, you bring to mind that ere little weapon I showed you when I wisited the old cove's stable."

Osborne nodded his head.

"That ere was the thing that laid 'im straight. I told the Tomtit I'd pay him off."

"Vot's the Tomtit going to do now? Trot you all back to the Nest again?" suggested Mr. Slinger.

"None on us knows as to that," said Mr Snag, "an' none on us cares. I'm pretty certain he's up to some sort of game, when he goes dodging around with them queer rigs on."

Tired of their low and insipid conversation, Osborne carelessly rolled himself on a bench, as though sleepy, but in reality to think over his new position. He had been hurried from one scene to another within the last week, and now was again amongst a class of men whom he instinctively shrank from. The noisome atmosphere, reeking with liquor and tobacco smoke—the coarse, brutal, profane manners of the ruffians—seemed to him doubly disgusting when contrasted with his late pleasant home. He looked back with a feeling of regret, that just at a moment when he was about to retrieve his character, a train of untoward events should precipitate him in the same difficulties. He thought of the wily lawyer, and his base plot of espionage, and chafed at the recollection of his inability to rescue the young lady from her perilous situation.

"I am the victim of circumstances," muttered our hero; "when and where they will finally end remains to be seen."

### CHAPTER XXI.

WHICH RELATES TO MR. DETECTIVE DUFFY.

The detective was not killed, as Mr. Snag had supposed. Picked up in an insensible condition he was carried into a neighboring house, a surgeon called, and his wounds pronounced of a serious character. When he recovered from the stupor, he grew delirious, and remained all the night in that condition, raving incoherently about burglars and fancying himself wandering in mazy labyrinths in vain search after the Tomtit's nest.

The next evening the delirium passed away and he awoke to consciousness to find himself in a neat little room, with a benevolent faced old lady standing by his bedside.

"Where am I?" inquired Mr. Duffy, in a feeble voice.

"Just where you ought to be," said the old lady, kindly.

With the remembrance of the events of the preceding evening, the detective sighed, and closed his eyes; then they opened again and rested on the pleasant feature's of his nurse.

Mrs. Betsy Lobens, for that was her name, was an old lady of about sixty-five. Her face reflected her honest, contented temperament; never aspiring, never restless, never dissatisfied, jogging on through life, easy and tranquil, it was one perpetual sunshine, without a cloud to mar the prospect. She had volunteered to nurse him and it was her house the detective was now in. Smoothing the pillow of the sufferer, and enjoining upon him the necessity of being perfectly quiet, the old lady sat down and commenced knitting.

"Bless me," soliloquized she, "how time does pass. All my old friends are fast dying away, and very soon I must follow. Every day the newspaper announces the demise of some one of my acquaintances." As Mrs. Lobens gave utterance to this in a moralizing vein, she put on her spectacles, and taking up the evening journal turned over to the marriages and deaths, commenting gravely as she proceeded, when involuntarily her eye lit on the following paragraph:

HEIRS OF MOSES ORAN.

*The heirs and relatives of the late Moses Oran of Manchester, England, who are believed to be residing in or near this city, will learn something to their advantage by calling on*

MORRIS CHOLER, No — SPRUCE ST.

"Bless me!" said Mrs. Lobens, reading the paragraph over again, "I wonder—*Moses Oran*—yes, it must be the same—*of Manchester, England*—why surely it must be."

Mrs. Lobens took off her spectacles and rubbed her eyes, then she put them on again, and once more scanned the notice. "Poor, dear young lady," continued Mrs. Lobens, her mind reverting to some scene of the past. "I can see her now. I wonder if that's her son who is to hear something to his advantage; I hope so at any rate." With this benevolent wish, the old lady put aside the paper and recommenced knitting.

The detective fell into a tranquil slumber and when the surgeon arrived he pronounced him much better.

The slung shot of Mr. Snag had inflicted a very bad injury in the back part of his head; the surgeon expressed the opinion, however, that with care he would soon recover.

A week passed, and Mr. Duffy mended rapidly. Under the skillful nursing of Mrs. Lobens, he was able soon to sit up and converse. The old lady, who was naturally of a very loquacious nature, beguiled the weary hours with a hundred stories which the detective listened to with patience and good humor.

Mrs. Lobens had been formerly a housekeeper in a hotel and was fond of relating her experience. One afternoon she was rattling on to Mr. Duffy—he as usual absorbed in his own gloomy feelings.

"Bless your soul, things have changed so," pursued Mrs. Lobens, "everybody is changed too, and not for the best either. I like the good old times Mr. Duffy, when people wasn't so starched and prim but what they wouldn't be above speaking to their friends if they were a little higher; people did not put on half the airs they do now."

"I agree with you," said Mr. Duffy smiling, "there was more simplicity and less ostentation in those days."

"To be sure there were," replied Mrs. Lobens gravely. "Such social gatherings, pleasant reunions and no formality. It makes me sad, Mr. Duffy, when I turn back to all the old scenes and know they have gone, never to return; and, now Christmas is coming, I don't look upon the day as I regarded it in my childhood, with its visions of Santa Claus—or even in my youth, with its social festivities. I see, indeed, the same things, but the actors are all different." Mrs. Lobens shook her head sadly and continued, "the old faces and forms have dropped off one by one, and each succeeding year creates another void."

Mr. Duffy did not reply, his face had resumed its troubled, anxious expression.

"Have you not found it so?" inquired Mrs. Lobens.

"Of late years I have not had many friends to love," replied Duffy, seriously.

"Dear me," observed Mrs. Lobens with sudden abruptness, "whenever I look in your face it reminds me so of somebody."

"Reminds you of whom?" inquired Mr. Duffy, with surprise.

"Poor young lady," said Mrs. Lobens, speaking as though to herself, "so many years have passed, but I can see her *just as plain!*"

Mr. Duffy regarded her with an air of anxious inquiry.

"You look surprised, but it is strange your features brought back an incident of years ago. Sad it was—so I never shall forget it."

Mr. Duffy expressed a wish to hear the story.

"It is now," commenced the old lady, taking off her spectacles, and rubbing her eyes with a thoughtful air, "more than nineteen years since I was housekeeper at the Beverly House—at that time one of the genteelest quarters of the city.

"One day a handsome young married couple, who had recently arrived from England, engaged a suite of rooms for the winter. They were quiet, retiring in their manners, and appeared immensely fond of each other.

"After they had been with us some two weeks, young Oran received a letter from England which rendered it necessary immediately for him to return. He was compelled to leave his young wife behind—I well remember the circumstances. It was a rainy, dismal day he left—she cried and clung to him, and he, poor fellow, appeared equally distressed; and for days after his departure her sad blue eyes——*Mr. Duffy, bless your soul, why what's the matter?*"

Mrs. Lobens paused in mute astonishment, for the detective had turned ghastly pale, and had nearly fallen from his chair.

"Nothing—proceed!" he gasped, with a strong effort to control his feelings.

Mrs. Lobens, who had not quite recovered from her amazement, continued:

"It was easy to observe that the young creature was unhappy. She wandered around restless and disquieted, and spent the best part of her time in her chamber. Weeks passed on, and months flew by, and Mr. Oran did not make his appearance. Three months glided away, and in the meanwhile she was confined, and gave birth to a pretty little boy.

"It soon became noised around the house that the girl had been deceived into a false marriage; the gossip at last reached the ears of the poor thing, and she was nearly frantic. I always blamed them for saying anything, for I saw in the beginning she was high-spirited, and just as I feared it turned out. Either the letters had miscarried or he wrote none, for during all this while she heard not a line from her husband.

"The conviction that she had been betrayed frenzied her young heart into the commission of a wild and rash act. One afternoon she left her child in charge of a servant, walked deliberately to the ferry, and, when half way across, flung herself into the water. Poor girl, her lifeless remains were found the next morning floating in the river."

Mr. Duffy covered his face with his hands, and uttered a deep groan.

"Go on, madam," he said, hoarsely.

Mrs. Lobens, unable to account for the strange behavior of the detective, proceeded with her narrative.

"The very next day a carriage wheeled up before our house, and who should appear but young Oran. It was an awful sight to witness the poor fellow's grief. Without waiting to hear or listen further, he dashed madly off, and we never saw him afterwards. But the strangest part remains to be told. He never knew he had a son."

The detective's face wore a curious expression of puzzled astonishment.

"What became of the boy—the infant?" he asked, after a brief silence.

"A vigorous attempt was made to find out the parent, and it was then consigned to the foundling asylum. I then lost sight of him, and so ends my story."

Mrs. Lobens then showed the newspaper which contained the notice to the heirs of the late Moses Oran.

"You will see by that," remarked she, that the poor fellow is dead at last, and the administrators are endeavoring to hunt up his relatives."

The detective examined the advertisement with much interest. What thoughts were suggested by its perusal he did not openly express, but certain it was the revelations of the old lady had led him into a new vein of thinking.

In a few more days he had so far recovered as to be able to walk out, and for the first time was apprised of the daring exploit of the young burglar in escaping from the city jail.

Not more than a week thereafter the detective had re-commenced his nightly strolls. Profiting by his past experience, his movements were characterized by more caution. He fully weighed the risk incurred, and his dauntless spirit, undismayed by his past ill success, was resolutely set on unraveling a mystery that seemed to grow even more entangling in its complications.

Let us turn out with him on his solitary beat. He chooses the lowliest and most suspicious localities, and dodging and slinking in shadows and deep recesses, he winds from alley into street, and from street back again to alley. Suddenly he pauses, for he hears a tread as quiet and cat-like as his own. He holds his breath and listens; when suddenly he finds himself seized upon from behind, and, in the flash of thought, gagged and secured beyond the possibility of resistance.

"Vell, ole cock, arn't you got it nice!" whispered a familiar voice in his ear.

"Hurry 'im avay!" said several gruff voices.

The detective was dragged and pushed along till the perspiration stood on his limbs from the compulsory exercise. In this state Mr. Detective Duffy was led into Gamble's mess-room, where the gag and bandage were both removed, and with a brutal jerk he was pitched in the middle of the apartment. On regaining his feet his heart sank within him, for glaring upon him from every side were fierce eyes, that sparkled with something more than mere revenge. He could see no mercy in their ferocious features, and he resignedly closed his eyes, expecting the next instant to feel a dozen knives lodged in his vitals. It was evident, however, that though they longed to tear him in pieces, they were indulging him in a brief respite to slake the fiery malice of their tongues.

"You willain," growled Mr. Slinger, advancing towards him with clenched fist, "you done a tall job of keeling me over vunce, an' I vill pay back the compliment."

Thereupon Mr. Slinger sprang upon him, and with a fierce blow, delivered with sledge-hammer effect, sent the detective rolling into the corner.

"Coward!" gasped Mr. Duffy, attempting to rise; "kill me at once, but——"

"That 'll come in good time," yelled five or six of the ruffians, brandishing their weapons over the prostrate form.

"Let 'im alone now, boys," interposed Mr. Snag, "we'll fix 'im in short order."

"The vork must be done afore the Tomtit gets back," said Mr. Slinger, excitedly.

"Pricking the pig allus improves the flavor," observed Mr. Molecat. "I wos about to recommend a werry pleasant and agreeable vay of finishing him."

"Curse you!" roared another villain, "you are the one that invaded our Nest; we'll teach you to go spying round."

Covered with blood, and half stunned by the brutal treatment he had received, the unfortunate detective was dragged into a closet and locked in. He knew the ruffians had only given him a brief respite, and that the work of death would soon commence.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

# THE BEAR AND PANTHER.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

A number of years ago, the farmers of Western Virginia were much annoyed by the depredations of the black bear, which would frequently enter their fields of corn in large numbers, and destroy their crops, carry off their pigs and small calves, and sometimes attack and kill their full grown cattle. Bruin, too, being very fond of honey, often gave much trouble and dissatisfaction to those who kept hives. After robbing all the "bee trees" he could find in the forest, his partiality for this sweet delicacy would tempt him into the orchards and gardens near the dwellings, where he would deliberately overturn the hives and help himself to the rich dainties, leaving both the bees and farmers minus their winter's store.

A Mr. Burchard, who had been many years settled in that section, and to whom we are indebted for the facts of the adventure which we here record, was not a little chagrined one morning, on going into his garden, to find some six or eight of his finest hives overturned and robbed by these nocturnal depredators; and he at once vowed to have his revenge upon the thieves, whose tracks in the soft, moist earth proclaimed them to be an old she-bear and her two cubs. The hives had been ranged in a long row against the palings at the extreme end of the garden and next to the orchard, where the fragrant apple boughs, bending over with their rich clusters of bloom, together with the garden flowers, a neighboring meadow and a field of clover, had afforded ample employment for the industrious little insects, which had been so cruelly treated by Mrs. Bruin and her two hopeful heirs, who, without fear of the law, and more especially of two stout watch-dogs that barked their anger from their near kennel, where they were chained, had broken in and helped themselves to all that they could carry away, doubtless intending to return and do more mischief on the following night.

"But it's my opinion," said Mr. Burchard, as he surveyed the scene of ruin with an angry eye, "that you won't come back to steal any more honey."

Waiting only for his breakfast, he took down his long rifle, loaded it carefully, and, releasing his dogs, set off to obtain his revenge.

The ground, as we have said, being moist from a recent rain, showed clearly the trail of the bears, which had taken almost a bee line for the nearest wood. On reaching the wood, however, the tracks of the beasts were not so easily to be traced; and for some cause the dogs got at fault, and led him a long, roundabout course, consuming two or three hours of time and without once getting sight of the objects of their search.

At last, becoming somewhat tired of his fruitless hunt, Mr. Burchard concluded to return home, and keep a watch upon his remaining hives through the night; but on his way back he sat down by a clear, mossy spring, to cool and rest himself and quench his thirst, when he was suddenly startled and alarmed by a most terrific scream.

He knew the direful sound—he had heard the like before—and clutching his rifle as his only friend, he bounded to his feet and looked eagerly around upon the interlocking trees and dense dark thickets in quest of the dangerous panther which had given him such timely warning. All was still, save here and there a leaf fluttering in the soft breeze that stole gently through the deep wood, and not a living creature was to be seen. Setting his back against the trunk of a large tree, after first assuring himself that the fearful beast was not crouched among its branches, Mr. Burchard waited and watched for several minutes, calling loudly for his dogs, which had strayed off beyond hearing. The longer he staid there, the more afraid he was to move, lest the furious animal, which might for aught he knew be closely watching him all the time, should get a favorable chance for pouncing upon him; but at length he nerved himself with a sudden resolution, and started cautiously forward, his rifle grasped with both hands ready for an instant aim, and his eyes turning swiftly in every direction, above, below, around.

In this manner he left the spring and continued his course homeward, breathing a great deal freer when he reached the more open part of the wood, and being only once again startled by a quick, heavy rustling in some bushes to his right.

When within a mile of home, Mr. Burchard heard the loud, angry barking of his dogs some distance in advance; and knowing they either had some game tree'd or at bay, and thinking it possible it might be the panther which had given him such a fright, he hurried forward, determined to have his revenge on some "varmint" for all his trouble and disappointment.

Guided by the sound, the good farmer was not many minutes in getting a sight of his two dogs, which were down in a deep hollow, barking furiously around the trunk of a large oak tree, with their heads elevated, and their eyes fixed sharply upon some object high up among the branches.

At first as he approached, owing to the thick, interwoven branches and dense foliage, Mr. Burchard could not see the game; but as he came under the tree, and drew near his dogs, he was both surprised and rejoiced to discover the three thieves of which he had been in quest.

Yes, there, high up above the reach of the infuriated dogs, in the very centre of the wide-spreading branches of a majestic old oak, securely sat mother Bruin, upright as a judge, with her hopeful cubs crowded in on either side of her. She seemed to be but little disturbed by the harmless barking of her foes, though evidently regarding them as intruders upon her privacy, and, as such, to be severely chastised if ever she should take the trouble to come down to them.

"So," said Mr. Burchard, with that air of satisfaction with which a man will sometimes talk to himself after making some pleasing discovery; "so, Mrs. Bruin, you're there, are you? you old she-thief! and your two thieving cubs are with you! and all well gorged with honey that belonged to me, I dare say. Very well, madam—as you have taken the liberty to sweeten yourself without my leave, I'll see if I can't sweeten you without your consent."

With this Mr. Burchard drew up his rifle, took a cool, deliberate aim, intending to shoot the old bear directly through the heart and end the contest at once; but just as his finger pressed the trigger, one of his dogs brushed against him and caused him to miss his mark. The ball, instead of killing the old bear, only slightly wounded her, and entered the side of one of the cubs, which, with a sharp cry of pain, instantly fell from its perch to the ground below, and was fiercely seized upon by the waiting dogs.

This was rather more than the angry mother felt disposed to submit to; and backing down from the tree in all haste, and leaving one trembling cub behind her, she sprung to the defence of the other, sending the dogs flying right and left. But they had too much courage to give her a clear field while life remained, and both valorously returned to the attack. Watching her chance, as they went round and round her barking furiously, she got in a heavy blow with her fore paw, and stretched one of the assailants dead at her feet; and then wheeling suddenly upon the other, she seized him in a terrible embrace, buried her teeth in his throat, and killed him almost in a breath.

All this took place in so short a time, that Mr. Burchard saw himself alone with his enemy even before his rifle was reloaded; and as he jerked out the ramrod and dashed the powder into the pan, he found the bear, which seemed determined to clear the ground of her foes and protect her young, standing on her hind feet within a few paces of him, and deliberately advancing to the final contest. Quickly drawing up and presenting his rifle, so near that the muzzle almost touched her body, he pulled the trigger; but as luck would have it, the piece missed fire, and perceiving his deadly peril, he instinctively ejaculated a prayer for mercy.

At this critical moment, when all hope seemed over, and the infuriated animal, pressing forward with a ferocious growl, was about to clasp the now trembling farmer in the embrace of death, a shrill, piercing scream, like that which had so startled him at the spring, at once changed the whole state of affairs. The bear stopped suddenly, threw back her ears, bristled her short, rough hair, and wheeled, with a sharp, savage growl, in the direction from which the sound had proceeded, and Mr. Burchard, looking keenly down the hollow to a ravine that ran up the side of a steep hill, perceived the yellowish form of a large panther, doubtless the very one from which he had escaped, crouched upon one end of an uprooted tree that slanted downward toward the base of the declivity.

Here, then, was a temporary respite for the hunter, and also a new danger, unless the two animals should come together for a mortal combat, and with breathless interest Mr. Burchard stood and watched the further development of affairs.

Slowly waving his tail to and fro, like a cat when watching his prey, the panther still remained crouched upon the log, his glowing eyes fixed upon his forest enemy, evidently challenging her to mortal combat, while on her part, the courageous bear seemed fully disposed to dispute the possession of the field against any foe and any number, whether brute or human, which might dare to venture upon the contest. With only a momentary hesitation, as if rapidly calculating all the chances, the bear, with low, savage growls, began to advance toward the panther, slowly at first, but gradually quickening her pace to a rapid trot, till she reached the end of the tree nearest her and farthest from her foe, when she mounted it cautiously, and continued her approach with a guarded, wary movement, creeping along till within a few feet of her fierce antagonist, and then elevating herself to an upright position, and there stopping to await the onset of her enemy, eyeing him keenly all the while.

Hastily picking the flint of his rifle and repriming it, Mr. Burchard, all tremulous with excitement, advanced quickly to the oak and took up a position where he could note every movement of the two beasts, resolved to watch the contest to the end, and then send his ball to the heart of the victor, in case either should escape with life.

The panther having waited for the bear to begin the attack, and perceiving there was no intention on the part of the latter to advance any nearer, now commenced his own wary movements, stealing slowly and cautiously toward his foe, slightly growling and waving his tail, but all the time retaining his crouching posture, and keeping his belly close to the trunk of the fallen tree.

Some half a minute was thus consumed—the two savage beasts eyeing each other like two gladiators—when, suddenly uttering a fearful scream, the panther rose with a lightning spring, and aimed directly for the throat of his foe. But quick as were his movements, the bear was ready for him, and using her fore paws after the manner of a pugilist, she not only broke the force of the bound, but gave her antagonist such a series of blows, that he momentarily fell back, uttering a wild, savage cry of rage and pain.

But the fury of both was by this time too much roused for any real cessation of hostilities, and the next instant they were together, and with movements so rapid as to be almost wholly undistinguishable, each striking, biting, growling and gnashing in the most savagely terrific manner.

The contest, however, was destined to be of no long duration, for in less than a minute the panther, getting a fair sweep with his sharp claws at the belly of the bear, laid it open to the entrails, and disembowelled her. The day was certainly over with the bear, but still, game to the last, she made one final, desperate effort, and getting her paws around the body of her foe, she drew him to her with an almost fatal embrace, and the two rolled from the log and fell heavily to the ground, where, with a furious bound, the panther cleared himself from his dying antagonist, and stood alone, above her, a proud but panting victor.

That moment of triumph was his last of life, for the rifle of Mr. Burchard was already levelled, and a leaden ball sped to his heart, and laid him dead in his tracks. Reloading his piece, and dispatching the remaining cub above him, Mr. Burchard went home and obtained assistance in removing his game to his dwelling. He was highly delighted with his morning's exploit, and to this day he shows with a hunter's pride the well-preserved skins of the panther and bear.

# THE STEPMOTHER;

OR,

# WHO'S TO WIN.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "RICHARD HOFFMAN," "STANFIELD HALL," "MINNIGREY," ETC. ETC. ETC.

## CHAPTER LXI.

If in some home a fire breaks out by chance,
The impetuous flames with lawless power advance
On ruddy wings the bright destruction flies,
Followed with ruin and amazing cries;
The flaky plague spreads swiftly with the wind,
And ghastly desolation howls behind. BLACKMORE.

No man knew the influence of money better than Humphrey Skillet, or liked less to part with it. It had been his idol through life—he had toiled for it—sinned for it—it had been his thought by day and dream by night—in his opinion, it was omnipotent! earth's master! a shield to turn the sword of human justice aside—of power almost to bribe the wrath of Heaven.

Although convinced of its potency, and sensibly alive to the danger of his position, it was not without a severe struggle that the miserable wretch brought himself to sacrifice a portion of his hoarded gains by engaging the services of Mr. Smooth—one of the most eminent criminal lawyers of the day—to defend him. The first consultation fee was a hundred guineas, which the learned gentleman insisted on receiving before he quitted London.

The prisoner groaned as he paid it. He had taken the life of a fellow-creature for a similar sum.

Three days after receiving it, the man of law presented himself at the gaol.

He was a little, shrivelled personage—with an extraordinary expression of shrewdness in the eyes, which seemed to peer and read the secret thoughts of those who came in contact with him; his face was mapped with the deep lines of thought; thin—peaked—and of the student's parchment hue. In looking upon him, it was difficult to believe that he had ever been young. Feelings and affections—if he ever possessed such things—had become fossils.

We doubt not but there are many members of the bar who still remember him by the familiar name of "The Gnat."

It was curious to observe the contrast of manner between Mr. Smooth and his client. The former appeared cool and self-possessed—spoke with terrible precision; the latter embarrassed, hesitating and suspicious.

"Permit me," said the lawyer, taking a seat as near as he could to the window of the cell, "to observe that, in a case like the present, perfect confidence and distinctness are absolutely necessary. I have known more than one trial *end fatally*," he added, "from want of proper confidence in the legal adviser. I trust it will not be our case, Mr. Skeppet."

"Skillet," said Humphrey, correcting him.

"Ah! I perceive," replied the gentleman, regarding his note-book. "It is Skillett. We will proceed to business, if you please."

"Business!" repeated the prisoner. "Yes, certainly."

There was a pause. The master of the poor-house could not bring his mind to make the necessary confidence.

"I am quite ready to hear your statement, Mr. Skillet," added Smooth.

Humphrey commenced a long, rambling history of his connection with Gilbert Harding and Sir Barnard Gaston, spoke of the death of Bella, which, of course, he had nothing to do with—the imprisonment of William Earl, and the murders of Hugh and Miles Goring; so mixing the transactions that it would have been impossible to tell, at any given point of his narration, to which particular one he alluded.

The man of law listened patiently till his client stopped for want of breath.

"Have you ever been ill, Mr. Skillet?" inquired Smooth, in his usually quiet tone.

"Ill!"

"And had occasion to send for a physician?"

"Several times; but what has that to do with it?" exclaimed his client.

"With what complaint?" demanded the former.

"Scarlet fever," replied Humphrey, wondering more and more what his legal adviser could be driving at.

"*And did you consult him, when he came, for the gout?*" said Mr. Smooth.

The sallow features of his client flushed deeply.

"I perceive we understand each other," added the speaker. "A lawyer and a physician require the same confidence: both are powerless without it."

The murderer perceived the soundness of the advice, yet it was not without an effort he brought his mind to unburden itself and pour into the ear of the man of law the history of his crimes. Judging from appearances, Mr. Smooth was no stranger to such confessions, for he listened to the appalling tale without moving a muscle of his iron visage.

"The case is complicated—exceedingly complicated," he observed, after a silence of several minutes. "The death of the woman—Bella, I think you called her—cannot be brought home to you—no jury would convict you upon such loose evidence. That of the boy, by management, might be reduced to manslaughter."

The countenance of Humphrey began to brighten.

"The worst affair is that of Miles Goring," added the speaker, musingly. "A thousand pities Sir Barnard Gaston died. Had you been indicted together, his name and influence might have saved you."

"Have I paid a hundred pounds to hear this?" mentally ejaculated the prisoner.

"You must have the very best counsel," continued Mr. Smooth—"Serjeants Bantum and Byng. If anything *can* be done, they are the men to bring you through."

At the word "can" the heart of his client began to beat violently, and he muttered something about procuring bail till the assizes.

The lawyer smiled at his ignorance of the law.

"Good, substantial bail—a thousand pounds if necessary," added the master of the poor-house.

"You forget, my dear sir," replied the lawyer, blandly, "that murder is a capital felony, and that no amount of bail can be taken."

"I must escape, then," exclaimed Humphrey, pale with terror.

"It might be advisable," observed Mr. Smooth, drily, at the same time looking around the cell, at the strongly-barred windows and iron door.

"You regard my case as desperate, then?" said the prisoner, following the direction of his eyes.

The lawyer gave a short cough and hemm'd once or twice before replying to him.

"Desperate, Mr. Skillet, is a decided, very decided word; the law, with all its beautiful simplicity, presents a considerable number of chances and uncertainties: much will depend upon the manner in which the witnesses give their evidence—the skill of the gentleman of the long robe engaged for the prosecution. Is any one getting up the case against you? or is it left in the hands of the magistrates?"

His client muttered the name of Collin Craw.

"The great city lawyer?"

"I believe so," replied Humphrey.

"The fellow hates me," he added; "he was brought up in the poor-house, and fancies that I ill used him; an ungrateful villain! It is he who is doing it all."

"*Unfortunate! very unfortunate!*" said Mr. Smooth; "he is the friend and confidential adviser of the Earl of Cheverly, the Home Secretary."

"And what has his lordship to do with it?"

"It is his duty to recommend to the Crown whether or not the royal mercy shall be extended to convicted felons."

"Then, the Lord have mercy upon me!" exclaimed the prisoner, starting to his feet and pacing the cell in agony; "I have none to expect from Collin Craw. I offered to give him the means of discovering his parents—for he was left an infant at the door of the workhouse—provided he would defend me, and he refused."

"You are in possession of a secret affecting his interests?" demanded Mr. Smooth, eagerly.

"Yes."

"You were wrong to hint the nature of it. Persons should never act, in your position, without legal advice. Very wrong; although it is just possible I may still be able to use it. I will see the gentleman, and——"

"It will be useless! you do not know him," interrupted Humphrey Skillet, "he is hard—hard as these stone walls. Find some other way to save me, and take half I possess! take all—reduce me to beggary—toil—the hulks for life! only let me live."

"No professional man of my standing, Mr. Skillet, accepts more than his professional fees," replied the great criminal lawyer, unmoved by the passionate appeal of his client; "anything beyond the line of my duty is perfectly out of the question."

"All alike," muttered the unhappy wretch; "all alike!"

"And this secret you spoke of?"

"I part with it only at the price of safety," exclaimed the murderer, with sullen fury. "If I hang, I shall at least have the pleasure of disappointing him."

"A very useless triumph," observed Mr. Smooth.

"Still it is a triumph," muttered his client.

To this resolution the unhappy man continued firm; not all the eloquence of his legal adviser could shake him. On every other point he agreed to follow his advice implicitly, and placed the large sum of money in his hands necessary to engage counsel and conduct his defence."

"Collin will yield," thought the criminal, as Mr. Smooth quitted the cell; "he has risen in the world, and is naturally proud and ambitious—the stain of the workhouse must gall him. I shall hear from him soon—very soon."

He was mistaken. Day after day passed, and yet no communication from his former drudge; still Humphrey Skillet did not despair. It was his last hope; no wonder that he clung to it.

It is now time that we returned to the important personage upon whom, as he believed, his fate depended.

As Collin Craw quitted the church, after the funeral obsequies of Sir Barnard Gaston, a feeble grasp was laid upon his arm. He turned, and recognized his old nurse.

"You here!" he exclaimed, "at this late hour?"

"I couldn't rest without seeing the fine show," replied the woman. "I aint seen many sights in my days; most on 'em wor passed in Wicksal poor-house. What a sinful waste! why, they ha' fexed as much good broad cloth about the church as would ha' made cloaks for half the poor women in the parish! I heerd Peters, the sexton, say as how it cost thirty shillin' a yard! Then the *velved*, too, on the *corfin*. Do you think, darlin'," she added, peering into his face, "it'll keep the worms from feedin' on him?"

"I fear not, Peg," said the lawyer; "they are sad levellers."

"That's my 'pinion too," muttered Peg Manders, shaking her head. "Rich and poor be all alike when it comes to that. But it worn't about the dead I wanted to talk to yer," she added, "but the livin'; I ha' seen him."

"Seen who?"

"The man as brought yer when yer wor a baby to Humphrey Skillet in the workus, as stood by a-larfin and joking wi' him while I stripped yer, and burnt the fine frock wi' the lace that would ha' made me such beautiful caps, and I wanted caps badly enough. It be a long time since that," she added, "but I knowed him."

At this intelligence, so startling and unexpected, Collin could scarcely restrain his agitation; hopes and doubts alternately rose and sank within his breast, lest memory had deceived the aged woman.

"You forget, nurse," he observed, "that it is thirty years since the circumstance you speak of took place."

"No, I don't, darlin'."

"Nearly half a life."

"If it wor a whole life," exclaimed Peg, "and a *hundred* years to the back of that, I don't care.

"I knowed him!" she added, emphatically; "I knowed him."

The earnestness with which the words were uttered convinced her hearer of one thing—her sincerity. Whether mistaken or not, it was evident Peg Manders believed in them.

"Where did you recognize him?" he asked.

"Well, I seed him fust in Wicksal," replied the woman," the day he wor let off afore the justices, when yer spoke up so beautiful, darlin', that it did my heart good to hear yer. I thought I knowed him then—couldn't get it out o' my head that I did. This mornin' I went to see Nan Datchet—you remember Nan, don't yer, at the house?—and take her a little tea, for I aint grown proud, though yer have given me a cottage and ten shillin' a week to live on, and I seed him agin; he wor a talkin' to one of the Londoners as comed for the great berryin'. I no sooner heard his voice than I wor sure it wor he. I can swear it," she added.

The hour was too late for Collin to permit the faithful creature to return to her new abode by herself; offering her his arm, he conducted her home, and then retured to Brook House, where the squire, Edward, Trevanion, and his ward were waiting his arrival.

"Has anything occurred?" inquired the latter, affectionately.

"Yes, my dear boy, a circumstance that may change the whole tenor of my life."

His friends regarded him inquiringly.

"I have discovered the man who brought me an infant to Wicksal poorhouse."

Surprise and satisfaction beamed on every countenance, and the Templar eagerly asked his name.

"Beckford!"

"The confidant of Sir Barnard," ejaculated the doctor.

"His agent at Penswick."

"The instrument of his crimes."

Such were the observations which followed the announcement.

"What is the resemblance, shade, dream or recollection," murmured Edward Gaston, "I cannot call to mind. It has haunted me these three days," he added, "and yet I cannot fix my recollections. Like shadows, they fly my grasp."

"They will strike you when, perhaps, least you expect it," observed Mr. Beachum, thoughtfully. "The name of Beckford has given rise to strange thoughts. I do not like to suggest, or I should say——"

The old man hesitated and regarded his friend Trevanion, who nodded to him to proceed.

"The picture gallery at Moultree," continued the speaker.

In an instant the scene flashed upon the memory of Edward Gaston—the dusty portrait—the housekeeper—the cedar chest and pall.

"By heavens, but you are right!" he exclaimed; "the resemblance is most striking. My uncle Richard!"

The squire and the doctor both smiled.

"We have observed it for some time," said the latter; "but, without proofs or clue of any kind, judged it wisest to remain silent. A mere likeness will not prove either birth or legitimacy. Richard Gaston was so young—not of age when he died."

The word "legitimacy" caused the pale countenance of Collin Craw to flush with shame. He would much rather have been born of poor and honest parents, than find himself the natural son of a king.

"I must see this Beckford in the morning," he observed; "suspense is insupportable. As for proofs, if there are any in existence, they will be found in the iron casket."

"We will pull the locksmith's house down," said Edward, "brick by brick, to discover it, should he persist in his guilty silence."

The conversation was interrupted by the appance of the butler, who came, almost breathless with excitement, into the room to announce that the Hall was on fire. His master tore open the shutters—a broad red sheet of light rose above the belt of firs that separated the grounds of Brook House from Moultree Park.

"Not the Hall!" exclaimed Edward, springing upon the lawn, "but the Dower House."

Instead of retiring to rest, the speakers started off at once to see if they could render assistance. The youthful heir alone remained behind.

The Dower House, as it was familiarly called, had been built as a residence for one of the dowager ladies Gaston, in the reign of Queen Anne, and, like most of the architecture of the time, presented a heavy, tasteless appearance; a flat façade of brick and stone, broken by narrow windows, and an ugly porch. For many years it had remained uninhabited, and only used as a receptacle for decayed furniture, invalid chairs and tables, and the constantly accumulating lumber of a large establishment.

It was in this desolate abode that Lady Alicia had decided on confining her prisoner, one room in the house being peculiarly adapted for such a purpose. It was high up, the windows securely barred, and a strong oaken door with a huge lock on the inside.

Doubtless it had formerly been used as the plate room.

The plans of the manœuvering stepmother were cunningly laid, and likely, as far as human foresight could calculate, to prove successful. She had no confidant except Beckford and the keeper, who were to secure the victim. For the rest, she trusted to herself, and the instant the funeral procession quitted the Hall, set forth to conclude the preparations alone, but not unobserved. Her politic nephew and son-in-law, Lord Raymond, who, under pretence of indignation at the conduct of the earl in accompanying the young heir to the burial of his brother, refused to attend that of his father-in-law, lest he should be similarly shocked, remained behind.

He guessed, from the thoughtful brow of his aunt, her abstracted air, and several half-muttered words he had caught, that she had some project in view which it might be his interest either to assist or thwart. Impressed with this idea, he cautiously followed her, saw her arrange wine and provisions, not for the expected prisoner, but his captors, in the chamber, and, when she descended to receive them, concealed himself in a closet in the room.

"I shall overhear everything that passes here," he thought, and with short-sighted vanity congratulated himself upon his cleverness.

"Have you succeeded?" demanded her ladyship, as the dog-cart drew up at the door of the Dower House.

Her agents pointed to the inanimate-looking mass at the bottom of the vehicle.

"'Tis well," she replied; "his resting-place is prepared."

The locksmith, although unable to move, could hear, and a sad foreboding seized him.

The horse was quickly unharnessed, and turned loose in the park, and the cart drawn into the coach-house; that done, the keeper and his companion raised their burden, and followed the cruel woman up the great stair-case.

Under ordinary circumstances, they might have felt surprised at the quantity of furniture piled in the hall and round the balustrade, but knowing the purpose for which the Dower House had been used, it excited no attention.

"So," said Lady Alicia, eyeing the cripple sarcastically, when his captors had released him from the cloak which muffled his head, and withdrawn the gag from his mouth," we meet again at last."

"We shall meet once more," replied the wretched man, whose fit of penitence had returned.

"Where?"

Andrews raised his hand and pointed on high.

"My conscience will not accuse me," said Lady Alicia. "I trusted you—paid you a liberal price for your labor, and you abused my confidence by stealing like a thief into my house at midnight, and plundering it. Wretch!" she added, with terrible calmness, "it is to you I owe the loss of my husband and my son—that I stand this night a widowed woman in the home you have made desolate."

Conscious that one part of her reproach, at least, was merited, the crippled victim of Goring's brutality bowed his head in silence.

"Where is the casket?" she demanded. "You refuse to answer me—be it so. I shall find a way to render your silence as useful as your confession. You will remain with him till the morning," she added, addressing Beckford and the keeper.

"Certainly, my lady," replied the latter.

"You will find some refreshments upon the table," added his mistress; "during the day, I will visit you again."

With these words she quitted the room, and, as she closed the door, locked it after her.

"A woman's precaution," said Beckford, laughingly.

At the word "casket," Lord Raymond, who, from his place of concealment in the closet, had overheard every word that passed, became deeply interested.

"I would give something," he muttered to himself, "to know all the windings of this mystery; with my knowledge of the world, it might be useful to me."

He was mistaken, as many of the race of calculators are; the knowledge, when possessed, proved worthless. He would have given it and all that he possessed for a draught of fresh air and a drop of water to cool his parched tongue.

But we must not anticipate.

Beckford and his companion sat down to supper, gaily enough—the former full of anticipation of the future, his promised stewardship and probable gains; the latter contented with the bribe he had already received for his share in the night's work. They even carried their good humor so far as to invite their prisoner to share the repast.

It was sullenly declined.

"As you please," exclaimed Beckford; "a fellow who loses may be excused showing a little temper. In the game of life, one should always calculate on a reverse. I do. What is the use of being so plaguy obstinate? Why not tell where you have secreted the casket, and end this state of uncertainty at once?"

"I should like to learn that," thought his lordship.

"I can promise you a liberal recompense," added the speaker. "Pooh! how warm it is!"

"And a lasting one," answered Andrews, sarcastically—"the grave. I know the woman I have to deal with."

"Ridiculous!" said his captor. "Do you imagine for an instant that her ladyship is capable of tampering with life?"

"I do."

"Or that I would assist her?"

"Willingly."

"Then you are wrong," replied the unscrupulous ruffian; "you are more valuable to me alive than dead, I can tell you?"

As he concluded the last observation, the speaker wiped from his forehead the thick drops of perspiration which had gradually gathered there, observing at the same time that the heat was becoming intolerable.

"What is that?" demanded the keeper, pointing to a thin smoke rising in several places through the floor.

His employer stood for an instant aghast—bewildered; then frantically exclaimed:

"The room below is on fire!"

"And *we* are prisoners!" groaned the locksmith—"all three prisoners! Now do you believe what Lady Gaston is capable of?"

At this terrible announcement Lord Raymond rushed from his place of concealment, half stifled, the perspiration streaming at every pore.

"Save me! save me!" he gasped, and fell, overcome by terror, upon the floor.

## CHAPTER LXII.

Water, water! everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink:
Water, water! everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink. COLERIDGE.

A fearful smile played upon the features of Lady Alicia Gaston as she drew the bolt of the door and descended the staircase. Once in the Hall, the guilty woman applied the light she carried with an unfaltering hand to the piled-up furniture, and stood calmly by till she saw it in a blaze. Having thus far accomplished her horrible design, she proceeded to the dining room, where she repeated the incendiary act.

The building was old: the oak-paneled walls and massive rafters quickly caught fire. The desperate woman had the courage to stand by and watch it till the heat became insupportable, when she opened the door communicating with the library.

The flames followed her.

"It is done," she murmured; "and the secret dies with them."

"Which?" demanded a voice near her. "Don't be alarmed or scream; and, above all," added the speaker in a whisper, "be careful what you say. My companion is a Bow-street officer."

"Mr. O'Moore!" ejaculated the terror-stricken woman.

"At your ladyship's service," answered the Irishman, gallantly. "But what is this?" he continued, looking around him. "I'm a *hathen* if the place is not on fire!"

"It is!" faltered the widow.

"Quick! see what can be done," exclaimed the secretary of Lord Cheverley to his companion.

The man attempted to penetrate into the library, but the flames drove him back.

"Impossible!" he muttered.

"Run to the Hall, then—alarm the servants—call for assistance—I will remain with her ladyship; no wonder she is frightened half out of her senses."

The officer thought so, too, for he had a shrewd belief the fire was her act; respect for the speaker, however, kept him silent.

"I am unsuspected," thought the guilty woman.

"Upon my honor and word, then, Lady Alicia, but I must offer you my compliments."

"Compliments!" she repeated.

"Upon your nerves! In the first week of your widowhood, too. But, as somebody says somewhere, in something I have read, genius is of no sex. By my faith, I begin to think—nor courage, neither."

"What is it you suspect?" demanded her ladyship, recovering herself.

"What, perhaps, you had better not ask me."

"I insist, Mr. O'Moore."

"Faith, then, I'll oblige you," replied the gentleman. "It's mighty little that I suspect, but a great deal that I know."

"And what do you know?" demanded the widow, hoarsely.

"First, that you have caused the poor devil of a cripple to be carried off by Beckford and some rascal as unscrupulous as himself, and most probably confined him here. By Heaven, I hear shrieks," he added. "Lady Alicia," he said, in a tone of indignation, "you are a murderess!"

"No, no," faltered the guilty creature.

The gallant fellow dashed into the library, but the flames proved an impenetrable barrier, and barred all access.

The shrieks were heard again.

"This is horrible," he exclaimed. "Lady Alicia Gaston," he added, turning suddenly round, "were you ever in India?"

"India!" repeated the bewildered woman, wildly, "no. Why?"

"Simply because they burn widows there."

"What mean you?"

"A funeral pyre is better than a scaffold," was the significant reply. "Think upon the disgrace to your family. Do you hear your victim?" The speaker knew not there were four persons in that burning chamber. "Have you a heart? conscience? reason? or sense? Down upon your knees, and ask pardon of God. The mercy of man must be denied you."

With a wild shriek the wretched woman broke from his grasp, and fled from the Dower House, but not without being seen by the servants and persons whom the cries of the officer had already alarmed.

"Let her go," thought Hector O'Moore; "for Lady Cheverly's sake I will not bear witness against her. The infamy that has already fallen upon her family has nearly broken the heart of Maude."

The two windows of the chamber in which the victim's of Lady Alicia's cruelty were confined, as we before observed, were narrow and strongly grated. Beckford and the keeper, as the heat became less endurable, shattered the panes with their fists, and stood, each with his face close to the bars, to inhale the fresh air, and at the same time calling for assistance.

The locksmith was already insensible.

"Give me your place," gasped Lord Raymond—there was room only for one at each window—"for a moment only—a moment—I am stifling."

"So am I," replied Beckford, savagely.

The appeal was made to the keeper, who only noticed it by observing something about "every man for himself."

Rendered desperate by this second refusal, the peer attempted to drag the men from the only places where it seemed possible to prolong existence; both repelled him—not hesitating even at blows.

The husband of Laura promised money.

His fellow-ruffians laughed bitterly. What was the use of money to them? They had earned that night more than they were likely to spend.

Meanwhile the crowd upon the lawn had increased; all attempts to extinguish the flames proved useless. As a last hope of saving the wretched beings, whose terror-stricken countenances they could distinguish glued, as it were, to the bars, several of the servants lashed a couple of ladders together and reared them against the wall.

They barely reached the window.

"A hundred guineas," exclaimed Lord Cheverly, "to any one who will mount."

The height was fearful; not a man stirred.

"And I will give another hundred," added Hector O'Moore, who, by this time, had joined his friend.

Whilst the crowd were still hesitating, Collin Craw, accompanied by the squire, Edward, and Dr. Trevanion, made their appearance. The former saw at a glance not only danger but the difficulty.

"An instrument," he exclaimed; "something to force the bars from the windows."

A servant placed a crowbar in his hand.

The next instant the lawyer was seen mounting the ladder, the summit of which he speedily reached, and instantly commenced a fierce attack upon the grating. For some time he labored with desperate energy. It was in vain that the earl and his friends called to him to descend; his resolution was taken.

At last, a portion of the barrier fell, and he succeeded in dragging Beckford, more dead than alive, through the aperture, and bearing him safely to the ground upon his shoulders.

This achievement was followed by a shout of applause.

Collin would have mounted again, but Edward and the doctor prevented him. They had seen the keeper disappear from the window.

"You shall not throw your life away," said the former; "remember you have a future to live for."

The name of his ward proved the most effectual remonstrance; when the lawyer heard it his resolution gave way—he felt there was a present as well as a future to live for.

There is nothing in this world like having some one to love and care for.

Beckford was at once conveyed to the Hall. As the servants bore him in their arms he revived for an instant, and asked the name of his preserver.

"Collin Craw," replied Trevanion, who followed closely, in the humane hope of assuaging his sufferings by his skill, even if it should prove impossible to save his life.

The patient smiled and muttered the word "strange."

Whilst the doctor attended to the half-charred victim of Lady Alicia's cruelty, Lord Cheverly continued to encourage the tenantry and townsmen in their exertions to extinguish the fire; but every effort proved vain. The flames encircled their prey as if a living intelligence directed them—not a portion of the building could be saved. The roof at last fell in, and a heap of smoking ruins, which still vomited forth sparks and fire, were all that remained of the old Dower House.

"Act as you think best," said the peer to his friend, Hector O'Moore, who had drawn him aside from the crowd to relate his interview with Lady Alicia. "For Maude's sake, I consent to anything. Did you ever hear of such a fiend?" he added.

The Irishman shrugged his shoulders.

"Remember one thing," added his lordship, "her grand-daughter must remain. I will not leave her in the hands of a murderess."

"But she is her legal guardian."

"It matters not."

"Should she refuse?"

"Then justice must take its course," replied his lordship, firmly. "By Heavens, Hector, but it revolts me to connive at this woman's escape."

"Maude!" whispered his friend; "Maude! Shame enough has fallen already on the name of Gaston."

O'Moore walked rapidly to the Hall, where despite the assertion of the housekeeper and Lady Alicia's own maid, that she was too ill to be seen, he succeeded in obtaining an interview with their mistress.

With all her coolness and self-possession, she started as he entered her dressing-room.

"Don't be alarmed, madam," said Hector, coolly, "*I am not the executioner!*"

These words brought the color to her cheek.

"Are you sent to insult me?" she demanded, with something of her former pride.

"No."

"To denounce me, perhaps?"

"No."

"It would be perfectly immaterial to me if you were," observed her ladyship. "The fire was purely and entirely accidental."

"Lady Alicia, I am here neither to insult nor denounce; those of my name and family have never yet descended to the character of bully or informer; but I need not remind you," he added, "that the most honorable man may be placed in the unpleasant position of *a witness*."

"I understand you."

"You must quit Moultree at once and for ever."

"Must!" repeated the detected murderess.

"Unless you prefer standing your trial," added Hector O'Moore; "in which case, neither Lord Cheverly nor myself would wish to interfere. The officers have already laid an information before the magistrates—an hour hence it may be too late. Go, everything is prepared."

"Yes! yes," faltered the guilty woman, whose courage gave way at the word 'warrant,' "we will depart at once."

"*We?*" repeated Hector. "May I ask the name of the unit worthy of transforming your ladyship into a plural?"

"My grand-daughter," replied Lady Gaston.

"The only person," observed the Irishman, blandly, "that you will not be permitted to take with you."

"Then I remain."

"Far be it from me to interfere with your resolution," said the gentleman. "Will your ladyship descend to the library?"

"For what purpose?"

"*Or be arrested here?*" he continued, without heeding the question. "The officers, I doubt not, out of consideration to Lord Cheverly, will show you every indulgence compatible with their duty—even to conveying you to gaol in your own carriage; but *once there*, Lady Gaston," he added, with terrible distinctness, "no earthly power can save you from the scaffold!"

At this fearful assurance, which the speaker, she well knew, had the power to carry out by appearing against her, the firmness of the haughty, guilty woman gave way—her will was crushed at last, and she consented to abandon Lydia to the guardianship of her aunt Maude.

"You have decided wisely," observed Hector, significantly; "another hour and it would have been too late."

From that day Lady Alicia was never seen more at Moultree. One person and one only, knew the place of her retreat, and supplied her with the miserable pittance on which she lingered out the remainder of her days, let us hope in penitence and prayer.

Meanwhile, a very different scene was passing in the chamber to which Beckford had been conveyed. Trevanion had examined the injuries the wretched man had suffered, with the same scrupulous care and tenderness as he would have handled a child. He looked upon his profession as a ministry to which all alike had claim.

"Will it be long," inquired the patient, feebly, "before I can be moved?"

"Not very long," answered the doctor, seriously.

"I don't feel myself in safety here with that she-fiend."

"Do you speak of Lady Alicia?"

"There are not two such monsters," muttered Beckford.

The guilty man evidently had not the slightest idea of the fatal character of the injuries he had received. He still clung to the world, believing that a few days would restore him to his former health.

"You are very good and very skillful," he observed. "Get me well as soon as you can, for I have a great many affairs to attend to—one most important."

"I fear so," said the doctor.

His patient looked him in the face.

"A journey."

"What journey?"

"*The one we must all sooner or later take*," replied Trevanion. "Arm your mind with fortitude to hear and bear the truth. You have not more than twenty-four hours to make your peace with this world and the next."

Beckford uttered a cry of surprise. At the very moment the fatal announcement was made he had been mentally calculating on the most profitable means of employing the knowledge he possessed.

"You are not serious?" he gasped.

"Most serious!"

"Then Heaven have mercy upon me!"

"Mercy follows repentance and atonement," observed the physician. "Recollect yourself. Is there no being in the world whom you have irreparably injured?"

"Many, many!" murmured the dying wretch.

Trevanion pronounced the name of Collin Craw.

"No; there is my hope of pardon!" exclaimed Beckford: "that one good act may plead for me at the bar of Heaven."

"What act?"

"I saved him. Send for him; let my confession be taken. It's a strange tale I have to tell. There must be a magistrate to hear it, and witnesses to attest it. Yes, yes," he repeated to himself, "that one good action of my life may plead for mercy for the rest.

"Are you quite certain," he added, struck by the hope that the doctor was deceiving him, "that I am so near, so very near to death! My pains seem less; can you explain the reason why?"

Trevanion bent over him, and whispered the word, "Mortification."

"I will confess!" shrieked the terrified patient. "God! how the world clings to us." The exclamation would have been more correct had he cried, "How we cling to the world!" The physician saw that no time was to be lost, and, after administering a restorative, sent for Lord Cheverly, Squire Beachum, Edward Gaston, and Collin Craw.

In less than an hour they were all assembled in the chamber of the dying man.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

NEVER purchase love or friendship by gifts; when thus obtained, they are lost as soon as you stop payment.

# A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY AN OLD SEA-CAPTAIN.

In the early part of the Venezuelian war of independence, BOLIVAR, who afterwards rose to such a pitch of greatness, was a colonel in command of the castle of Puerto Caballo, that commanded the harbor and the town of that name. The populace were opposed to the patriots, and unfortunately there was a traitor in the castle, named Cabrera, who was the adjutant of the post.

I had been in port several days, transferring my cargo from my vessel, the SEA-SHELL, to the castle, having sold out my entire stock in trade to Bolivar at a good round price. I had landed the last package from my brig, and had taken in water and ballast for my return voyage; and intended, so soon as the land breeze should rise, on the following morning, to lift my anchor and away. I had received my money, and all that remained was to pay my respects to the commandant and the other officers, for whom I had conceived a warm friendship.

Accordingly, as night fell, I stepped into my yawl and directed my men to pull to the boat-landing beneath the northern bastion of the castle, where I left them with orders to return to the brig, and come for me when I should signal for them by swinging my boat-lantern from the battlement.

I had been expected, and Bolivar, with a number of his officers, received me with that affability for which he was remarkable.

After supper, wine and cheerful conversation followed till a late hour. All his officers, with the exception of Cabrera, the new adjutant, were present. This man's duty was to make the round of the citadel, examine into the security of the prisoners, and see that the guards had been properly disposed, and then to report to his commander. But the hours passed on till deep in the night, and yet the adjutant had not made his appearance.

Bolivar began to evince signs of impatience, and directed one of the lieutenants present to descend to the guard-house and order the absent officer to present his night report immediately.

The messenger returned without the adjutant, and, with a troubled expression upon his face, approached his commander and whispered something in his ear.

"No! no!" exclaimed Bolivar, as he sprang to his feet. "It cannot be true!"

But at this instant a pistol-shot was heard, and then a volley of musketry, followed by shouts of—

"Long live the King! Death to the rebels!"

"Follow me, gentlemen!" exclaimed Bolivar, as he snatched up his sabre, and sprang to the door. "That arch villain, Cabrera, has released the newly-arrived prisoners, surprised the guard, and opened the gates to the cut-throat dogs of the city!"

So saying, he rushed to the parade, followed by the officers and myself. But it was now useless to proceed farther, for so completely had the treacherous adjutant formed his plans, that the fort was already in his possession.

Bolivar, at a glance, comprehended the state of the case; and motioning us back to the quarters whence we had issued, followed in our rear, and strongly bolting the postern behind him, rejoined us in the supper-room.

"Gentlemen," said he, now perfectly cool, and master of his feelings, "the castle is in the possession of these traitors! Treachery has conquered all our vigilance, and there now remains to us but one hope. Captain Gordon," he continued, turning to me, "can you instantly signal your vessel?"

"I can," I answered.

"Then, sir, do so! She presents our only hope of escape!"

While he was speaking we could hear an excited rabble battering at the postern opening upon the room we were occupying. Soon the murderous crowd would be upon us. I ran out upon the balcony overhanging the harbor. There lay the little Sea-shell, resting quietly upon the water, like a duck asleep with her head under her wing. Not a ripple disturbed the calm bosom of the harbor, for it was at that breezeless hour when the regular northeast trades having died away, were soon to give place to the briefly continuing breath of the land. I waved my lantern, and the signal was instantly answered. The sudden alarm within the castle had aroused my men; and while I yet swung my light out over the balcony, I heard the rattling of the oars in the boat, and then the splash of the sweeps in the water.

At this moment we heard a crash of the door below, and in another instant a rush was made for the room where the officers yet lingered. Bolivar, like a lion at bay, turned upon the fierce assailants, and with his powerful arm rained upon their heads a deadly shower of sabre cuts. The entrance was soon deluged in blood; and, although well seconded by his companions, the crowd that forced itself up from below, regardless of the deaths of their comrades, were in a moment too numerous for him, and the governor and his friends were obliged to fall back within the balcony.

I had continued to swing my lantern, impatiently urging my men to the shore, and now shouted to them for God's sake to make all haste. This, however, was not necessary, for I was satisfied that they were doing their best. Still they were too late! The insurgents rushed in upon us, and were already swarming upon the balcony, when Bolivar shouted—

"To the water, friends!—To the water!—The tide is up, and we must swim for it!"

And setting the example, he leaped over the balustrade, and suspending himself a moment, swung his body out over the rocks, and dropped below. We heard a plunge, and then an encouraging shout, and could see the brave colonel strike out boldly toward the approaching boat. We followed him, and by the time the last of the patriot officers had reached the water, the place we had left was filled with the fierce traitors, who rattled volley after volley upon us. But all in vain. Not a man was touched.

Scarcely had we struck out from the rocks than the boat reached us, and in five minutes more we were all safely on board the Sea-shell.

The land breeze soon sprang up, and before the insurgents could bring the guns of the fort to bear upon us, in their eager search for the plunder of the officers' quarters, we were flying out of the harbor.

After cruising a few days on the coast, we fell in with a Columbian privateer, on board of which, at his request, Bolivar and his companions were transferred.

On a subsequent voyage, when the patriots were once more in possession of the ports, I met again with the hero of that night's adventure at Puerto Caballo. He had already risen to the command of the revolutionary army, and had not forgotten the little service I had then rendered him. I was received with the most flattering attentions, and among other testimonials was presented with the commission of port captain in the new navy of the Republic; and when Bolivar afterwards became president, he caused my name to be enrolled on the pension list of the government, and to this day I continue to receive this token of the friendship and gratitude of that truly noble patriot.

* * *

HE who has most of heart knows most of sorrow.

## THE VOICES.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

There's a voice from the heart of the mountains;
A voice from the wind on the steep;
And a voice from the sacred old fountains:
And a voice from the mighty old Deep:
Hark the chorus of grandeur and glory,
With its burden of Nature's great story!

II.

Now the tempest its trumpet is blowing;
Now the cataract joins in the song;
Now a deep voice is gloriously going
In majesty through the whole throng:
'Tis a chorus of grandeur and glory,
With its burden of Nature's great story!

III.

O, I must not be silent! Wake, Lyre,
Join the triumph that swells in the strain;
Fling abroad all thy jubilant fire:
Be a comrade of mountain and main:
Roll the chorus of grandeur and glory,
With its burden of Nature's great story!

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# THE STARVING SETTLERS;

OR,

## THE DREAM AND FULFILLMENT.

*A Remarkable Incident of the First Settlement of the Green Mountains.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS.

"I want you should tell me that story again, grandfather,—that story about grandmother and the children starving in the woods, and the curious dream you had about it, you know," said a small, bright boy, coaxingly laying his hands on the knee of an aged man, who sat listlessly smoking his pipe in his easy chair, placed in the doorway of one of the rural cottages of Vermont, so that he could look out on the green hills he loved so well, while enjoying the grateful coolness of a midsummer evening.

"Yes, my boy," responded the old man, rousing himself from his reverie, and laying aside his pipe. "Yes, that strange and wonderful dream!—I love to recall it, because I shall always believe it came from Heaven to give me the forewarning that was to be the means of saving my family from perishing of hunger.

"But in the first place, my boy, perhaps you would like to know how your grandfather and his family came to settle here in the woods, at that time so far away from the homes of any other settlers. I will tell you:

"Fifty years ago I lost nearly all I was worth, by the great depreciation in the old Continental paper money which followed the close of the revolutionary war.

"But I resolved not to lie down and die under the misfortune. I posted off to the city and got my continental rags changed to silver, before they grew any worse; and seeking out a land proprietor of the new State of Vermont, I soon struck a bargain with him for three hundred acres for two hundred dollars, paid him on the spot, and came home with the deeds, maps of the country, &c., in my pocket, together with a surplus of one hundred dollars to get me to, and start me upon, my new purchase. Within one week we were all, with the team and driver hired for the purpose, on our way to the last settlement, in the direction of the place where I was to establish my forest home; within another, having got my family into comfortable quarters, I was, with pack, gun and ax, making my way through the pathless forest towards the locality of my land, which, though over thirty miles distant, I succeeded in reaching that day before sunset. I found my land, as I was told I should, lying on the east bank of Onion River, and embracing a noble expanse of forest meadow-land, bounded north and south by two considerable streams, that here came in on the same side of the river, and less than a mile apart. Here, lodging in my bark-covered shanty, alone in the wilderness, with no white inhabitants within thirty miles of me on any side, I worked through the whole of that long summer and autumn, cut down, burned and cleared up ten acres of forest, built a comfortable log-house, laid up, in part, by the timely assistance of some transient land-lookers, and then, as winter approached, returned to my family in the settlements.

"Being now with my family again, I cheerfully worked through the winter for what I could get, bought a stout horse, and made other preparations for an early removal in the spring to our new home in the woods. And accordingly, when May came, with my wife and our two youngest on the horse, in addition to the bag of meal, bedding and clothing, with which the strong beast was loaded down, and myself, with pot and kettles, filled with seed corn, salt, plates, knives and forks, slung on my back, and gun and ax in my hands, and with all my older children placed in a row behind me, we, early one morning, commenced our toilsome journey through the wilderness. Not being able to get through, with all our encumbrances, in one day, we halted at dark, threw up a bough shanty, and under it, with a fire at our feet, all slept soundly, except myself, who kept awake to be on my guard against the wolves and catamounts, which were often heard howling in the woods round our camp, and once came so near it, that I could see their eyes gleaming in the light of our camp fire. It was a hard journey for us throughout; but we got safely to our new home the next day; and notwithstanding our fatigues, we all felt very happy and grateful. Our long-dreaded journey was over, and we thought our hardships at an end, happily blind to the terrible trials we were destined yet to encounter.

"In the course of a month, I found our breadstuffs were getting too low to admit of much longer delay in procuring a new supply, and with the view of being sure of having such a supply in season, I resolved to make a journey, at once, for the purpose, to the settlement on Lake Champlain, which was rather a shorter and easier route than the one to the other settlement where I had lived. There were at this time a few families living on the eastern shore of the lake, at the place which has since grown up into the populous village of Burlington. Among these, the leading man, and life and soul of the settlement, was one Gideon King, who afterwards became the rich man of the lake country. When I reached my destination, I ascertained that there were no breadstuffs to be had in the place. But King said he had that day dispatched a sloop to the south end of the lake for a load of meal, flour and other provisions, which were to be brought overland from Albany, and that if I would wait for her return, which would doubtless be within five days, I should be supplied, and in the meantime he would give me employment. Falling in with this proposition, I went to work, and, for several days, felt no uneasiness. But when five days had passed, and no sloop made her appearance, I expressed my surprise and concern to her owner. He, however, seemed to feel no apprehensions for her fate, and, attributing her delay to some failure in the arrival of some part of her cargo from Albany, recommended me to keep on at work and wait patiently for the sloop, which now, within a day or two, would certainly make her appearance. This I at last consented to do, though very reluctantly; for I somehow began to feel a singular misgiving about matters at home; and feeling tired as well as dejected, I that night went to bed before dark, and immediately fell asleep; when I seemed to be at once transported, either in dream or vision, to my distant home, and placed on a broad maple stump standing about a dozen yards in front of the door of my cabin. Without being permitted to speak, or make myself known, I was allowed to see all that was going on among the family, who were quietly moving in and about the house, and preparing for supper; for it seemed to be just about the time of the evening when I had fallen asleep thirty miles off. I perceived that the fresh fish and game I procured for them had all disappeared, and that they now had nothing in the house to eat but bread. And I soon saw my wife and daughter, Minny, then a resolute girl of sixteen, in earnest consultation about something, which I understood related to the necessity of having some trout caught that night for the next morning's breakfast—a feat which I knew Minny had sometimes performed. It was with no surprise, therefore, that I soon saw her come out of the house, take down my fish-pole, with hook and line attached, and, taking my next, a boy of nine, along with her, dig some grubs for bait, put them on the hook, proceed to the river, and throw in. Shortly after this I saw her look up with a significant smile; and the next moment I saw her bending and straightening with all her might in a pull upon the pole, while a prodigious large trout was brought flashing and floundering to the surface of the water, when suddenly the pole flew back with a jerk, stripped of both hook and line. It would be difficult to describe the look of disappointment and concern which stamped the unlucky girl's countenance, as she sadly took her way back to the house; and most keenly did I sympathize with her troubled feelings, for I knew as well as she did, that the loss of their only hook and line was a great calamity to them all. Nor was this all that seemed to disturb me and increase my anxieties for the family. I somehow felt that there was still some greater misfortune in store for them, and near at hand. So I kept my post to watch for whatever might befall.

"It was a bright, starlight night, and, after having seen my family make their supper, on their Indian Johnny cake and water, bar the door, retire to their beds, and all become hushed in slumber, I seemed to employ my time in alternately casting watchful glances round the house that held all my dearest treasures, and then, in gazing around my opening, and on the wall-like masses of forest which, looming up dimly against the sky-light, seemed to enclose it in far-stretching, mountain ramparts. Standing here like a sentinel on his watch-tower, I appeared not to be conscious of the lapse of time. A vision which must have extended through seven or eight hours, did not seem to occupy one; and before I thought of morning, the chirping of the wood-birds, and the peculiar chill and ruffling of the air which are always the precursors of approaching day, apprised me that the dawn was close at hand. While making these observations, I heard the cracking of brush, as if under the tread of some heavy animal, emerging from the woods into my opening. And, the next moment, I could discern a large, black, moving object, attended by two small ones, making a wide circle around my house, but drawing nearer and nearer, and snuffing eagerly, as if for some scented food, as they approached. I perceived them to be a bear and cubs, and knew they were intent on seizing something; but still I felt no apprehensions for the family, for I knew that the bears would not be able to effect an entrance into the house.

"But as I saw the old bear cautiously leading her cubs under a small, open, bark-covered shed, which I had previously thrown up against one end of the house, for storing dry wood, and to serve as a convenient place for my wife to keep her kettles and such things as she had not room for in the house, an alarming truth, for the first time, flashed across my mind: Among the rough articles of furniture I had dug or hewn out from logs, was a small but heavy chest, which I had placed under my bark shed, and beneath the window opening into it, and which, for want of a lid, I had kept covered with a wide roll of peeled spruce bark. And I now recollected that the morning I left, wishing to take my bag with me, I had, for want of a receptacle indoors, emptied all our remaining stock of meal into this chest, which, with its wide, overlapping cover, I supposed would be as secure as if placed inside the house. And scarcely had the recollection come to mind, before I saw the old bear approach the chest, tear off the bark cover with her paws, and plunge her head within. The hungry cubs quickly followed her example, and all three, the next moment, were obviously engaged in devouring our little treasure of meal, while, with feelings amounting to perfect agony, I was compelled to witness the destruction without the power of stirring from my post, or of raising the least outcry to drive the thieving brutes away. They made short work of it, and turned to retreat from the place, when, in so doing, the old bear trod on the bark cover, which broke under her great weight with a loud crash. The noise evidently, for the first time, awoke my wife, for I at once heard a stir within, and the next moment, I saw her hastily thrust her head from the window, glance wildly after the retreating bears, and then look down, in utter consternation, into the empty, beslabbered chest beneath. She seemed to comprehend everything in an instant, and turned away with a cry of anguish and despair that pierced me to the heart like a sword. I made a desperate effort to leap from my stand to rush to her side, and thought I was succeeding, but instead of striking the ground, I landed on the floor of my bed-room in King's house, on the lake shore, and found myself awake, just as the first flushes of the morning were breaking through my window. For some time I could not give up the idea of the reality of what I seemed to have witnessed, so vividly had every scene been impressed on my mind. But, after rubbing my eyes, striking my head and collecting my confused senses, I was forced to pronounce it all a dream. But it seemed to me to be a providential warning of some terrible calamity impending over my family; and so I hurriedly dressed, went down, related my dream to my employer, and told him I believed I ought to start immediately for home. But King had no faith in dreams, and especially none in the one I had related, which he said was too absurd to spend a thought upon. And besides, he said it would be no use for me to return now, for I could carry no meal. He was almost out himself, and no other family in the place would dare to part with a pound. No, I had better keep on at work, as the sloop would be along that day or the next, and I could then have all the supplies for my family I could carry.

"Over-persuaded, but not satisfied, I again proceeded, after breakfast, to my work, and kept on, thinking every morning that the sloop would surely arrive by night, and every night, that she would be in by morning, and being more reluctant than ever to leave without anything for my family, I staid several days longer, when, on the tenth night of my absence from home, I had another dream, a complete counterpart of the former one. I was again transported in spirit, at the same hour, to my old stand before my house, when my mind seemed first to be drawn back to the time I was there in vision before, and then to take up events where I had left them, and follow them day by day as regular as a journal, to this my second visit. I saw my wife, the day following the loss of the meal, go out into the yard, in response to the cries of the children for food, pick up the feet of a deer I had killed a fortnight before, and make of them a broth, which was all they had to nourish them that day. The next day, after gathering a mess of wild onions or leeks, which, as miserable as they were for food, were the only things they were certain of obtaining, my daughter and oldest boy ranged the woods till nearly night, with poles or clubs, in the hope of being able to knock down a partridge or squirrel, but without success. And they renewed the vain search on the third day, and kept it up till my boy gave out, when my daughter brought him to the house and gave over the profitless attempt. They had then lived three days on no other food than on the wretched deer-feet broth on the first day, and then on the green, trashy leeks that thickly grew on the banks of the river, and all the younger children had grown so feeble that they could only crawl about the house. Even my wife, grown so thin and haggard that I should hardly have known her, could not walk steadily across the floor, and they all were evidently fast running down to helplessness and death—all but my brave daughter, who bore up wonderfully against the threatened calamity. On the evening of the day last mentioned, she gathered in a large quantity of leeks, and early the next morning she was astir, and preparing to carry out the resolution she appeared to have secretly formed for the relief of the family, which was to try to reach the southern settlement and return with food in time to save them from perishing. Accordingly, despite the remonstrances of her mother, who, when informed of the bold resolve, said it could only result in her death on the way, she left the house, and disappeared in the direction of her proposed destination.

"I seemed readily to understand why Minny had gone to the southern settlement, instead of following me, who might be expected to bring food as soon as any was to be had. During our residence there, the winter before, she had received the attentions of a young man of the name of Constant Martin, which he was very anxious should result in marriage. And she knew, if she could reach there that day, he would not only procure provisions, but attend her back with them the next day, and in time, she believed, yet to save them all from death. The day of her departure was a sad one for the rest of them, but it at length wore away, the evening bringing up the time to this, my second vision. I was left to take direct note of the present condition of my suffering family. But O, what an agonizing sight for a father and husband to witness, was there! The pinched, skeleton faces of my prostrate children; the feeble wails and piteous cries for food that every few minutes burst from their lips, amidst their disturbed slumbers, and the sobs and prayers of their almost as feeble mother, vainly trying to encourage and comfort them, were the only sights and sounds that greeted my pained senses during the night, through the whole of which I seemed compelled to keep up my distressing vigil. At daybreak, however, I appeared to be suddenly released, and awakening, found myself, as at the close of my previous vision, in my bedroom at Burlington.

"This second dream, so curiously connected with the first, instantly removed every lingering doubt from my mind. I now knew them both to be true. And I now determined not to delay another hour in starting for home. So, after glancing out of my window down to the landing on the lake, and ascertaining that the sloop had not arrived, I hastened to my employer, related my fresh dream, and announced my resolve for an immediate departure. This time making no effort to delay me, he brought out the remains of a cold, boiled fish, with a small piece of bread, bade me eat and begone, adding, that I could at least go and kill wild meats enough to keep my family from starving till breadstuffs could be procured. Within fifteen minutes, I was on my way home, which, by strong exertions, I thought I should be able to reach by the middle of the afternoon. But in endeavoring to save the distance of several miles by striking directly across the forest, instead of following up the river round the northern bend of the last fifteen miles of its course, I got bewildered and lost in the woods. And after wandering about all the forenoon, I reached the river only a mile or two nearer home than my first starting point. To make up my lost time, I now made the most strenuous efforts to get forward, pausing only to throw myself down at the cool rills I crossed on my rough and tangled way, to quench the burning thirst that was continually parching up my lips and throat to fever heat and dryness. But with all my exertions, I perceived the daylight declining, and a dark, cloudy night settling down upon the wilderness, while miles of my journey yet remained to be accomplished. How I then, in fading twilight, forced my way over and through the obstructing objects of the forest, it is now impossible for me to tell, and I only know, that after a long and terrible struggle, I at length emerged into my opening, and threw myself panting and exhausted down upon the ground. While lying here to recover my breath and strength before going forward to present myself to my family, I felt while turning on my hip, something in my pocket, which I did not know was there. But I now recollected that while I was at my breakfast that morning, Mr. King came up behind me and slipped something in my pocket, which till then I had forgotten to examine. But I now eagerly thrust my hand into the pocket, and drew forth a small flask, which I found to contain a good half pint of Jamaica spirits. I blessed God for the discovery, for, while taking a much needed swallow myself, I thought how beneficially this spirit might be used in the restoration of my family if I found them in the situation I so much apprehended. But what if, by this time, they were all dead? In the pang of anguish that shot through me as the dismal fancy crossed my mind, I sprang to my feet, and rushed forward to the top of a little swell, which commanded a full and near view of my house; my heart sank within me as I sent a searching glance over the dimly discerned outlines of the building and perceived all to be as dark and silent as the grave!

"Dead! Yes, all dead! I groaned in an agony of spirit that almost smote me to the earth. But stay! what was that? O joy! it was a twinkling light, issuing from the crevices between the logs composing the walls of my house. Now Heaven be praised! I shouted, they are yet alive! And, the next moment, a bright flash, as if caused by the stirring up of a decayed fire, and the plainly audible sounds of the naturally accompanying movements within the house, fell together on my overjoyed senses. Yes, alive, and all alive and well, I'll warrant it, after all this fright and fuss, I exclaimed in the sudden and intoxicating revulsion of feeling. Now what a prodigious fool I have been to be so worked up by those miserable, empty dreams! They shall never know it, however; and I will put on such a face as I meet them, that they cannot even mistrust I have been guilty of such folly. So, with an assumed lightness of manner and motion, I passed on rapidly to the house, and entered the door, briskly exclaiming, '*Hurra! to you all—here I am, at last, but as hungry as a bear. So, now, wife, for a good supper!*' But as my eyes fell on the face of my wife, and then glanced over those of the children, as they lay feebly moaning and sobbing on their pallets, I stopped as short as if I had met a staggering blow in the face. My wife raised her pale, emaciated, wobegone face, and gave me a look of anguish and rebuke, that, to my dying day, I shall never forget. She made an attempt to speak, but her lips trembled, her frame became convulsed, and she burst into a paroxysm of weeping, so violent as to prevent her from uttering a word.

"'*Never mind, O, never mind, dear wife,*' I soothingly said, as soon as I could speak, '*you need not try to tell me—I know all. But cheer up, now; for though I bring no meat, you and the children shall yet be saved.*'

"And with that I ran to my cupboard, took down a large spoon, and filling it from my flask of spirits, approached and poured it into her mouth, and then administered, one after another, a like dose to each of my children. I then kindled up a smart fire, hung over it a pot of water, into which I flung a little salt, seized my gun, examined the priming, and saying, in answer to the inquiring look of my wife, that I would be back with *some* kind of game within an hour, rushed out of the house for the woods. I remembered that there was a cove of still water in the river, about half a mile from the house, in a deep and dark part of the forest, where the moose often resorted, to keep the musketoes and flies from their legs, by standing in the water the fore part of the night. To that spot I now directed my steps. After reaching the place, as I did with much difficulty, owing to the thick underbrush, and the darkness which was there so great that I could not see a hand before my face, I cautiously crept forward to the edge of the water and took my stand opposite to the path in which the moose used to come down into the cove. Here I stood some twenty minutes, when suddenly the well known, heavy and peculiar *tramp—tramp—tramp* of the long-stepping moose distinctly fell, and fast grew louder, on my ear. And, presently, with a crash and a splash, the animal came down the bank in the old path, and plunging into the water, came to a dead halt within fifty yards of the spot where I was standing. My heart leaped into my mouth at the sounds, and my gun was quickly brought to my shoulder, and my finger involuntarily began to draw on the trigger. But what the use in firing, when the animal was as invisible to me as if he were a mile distant? None, unless some higher power interposed to assist me. Yet fire I must; and therefore, in an agony of earnestness, I breathed the prayer:

"'*Father of all—helper of the suffering—feeder of the hungry, thou seest the situation of my starving family, and the certain death that awaits them, without speedy relief. Then, O, wilt thou not in thy mercy, direct the bullet, and provide the food which shall save them from perishing. Amen!*'

"With the last word I pulled the trigger, and the deafening report of my heavily loaded gun pealed out on the hushed wilderness; while the sudden and terrible plunging and splashing, as of a strong animal in its death struggles, told me how well my bullet had executed its Heaven guided mission. After waiting a minute for the animal's struggles to subside, I ran round to the part of the cove where he lay, dashed in, seized one of his hind feet and drew him ashore, just as he was bubbling out from his submerged nostrils, his last gasp of life. Instantly whipping out my hunting knife, and guided mainly by the sense of feeling, I ripped down and tore away the skin from one of the haunches, cut out a good junk of solid flesh, and with it made my way with all possible speed to the house.

"When I reached there, I found the family, who had been sufficiently revived, by the spirits I had given them, to take note of passing events, in a state of tremulous excitement and expectation, occasioned by hearing the report of my gun, which, from their faith in my skill in hunting, they took as the certain herald of success. And and as the eyes of the children fell on the moose-meat I brought in, swinging down in my hand, all came hastily tottering *and crawling to my feet, and clutching the meat with tooth and nail, like so many famished kittens, would have gulped it down raw.* But knowing the danger of permitting them to eat solid food till the tone of their enfeebled stomachs had been somewhat restored by gradual feeding on nutricious liquids, I snatched the meat away, shaved off a good quantity of thin slices and dropped them into the now seething pot I had placed over the fire in anticipation of some such event as had now so providentially occurred. I then did my best to keep the clamorous brood quiet for the next half hour; when I began to dip out, in small quantities, the broth, and administered it with a spoon to each of the family in turn. This I diligently pursued for the next hour, each new mess of broth, as I drew it from the pot, being perceptibly thicker and more nutricious. By this time, so fast had they all revived, they began to appear like themselves, move round the house, go out into the yard and engage in conversation. My wife, after saying she had been wondering why I had not inquired for Minny, began to relate how and when she had left, and express fears for her safety. But I here also cut her short, telling her I knew all about that too, all which in good time I would explain, but bid her borrow no trouble; for I had full faith that the girl was safe. And while I was yet speaking, my oldest boy, who had been some time out in the yard, came hastening in and said he had heard some one in the woods to the south. I rushed into the yard and raised a long halloo, which was quickly answered by a voice which I knew to be my daughter's, and which by its tones indicated joy and exultation, instead of trouble. Presently I raised another call, that as promptly as before brought my daughter's response, this time accompanied by a male voice, which I recognized to be that of her lover, Constant Martin. '*They are coming!*' I shouted, now relieved of my last anxiety, and dancing about for joy.

"In five minutes more, with eager inquiries and joyful exclamations, they came rushing into the house, laden with meal, flour, and other provisions. Our trials and sufferings were now over. We felt that we had passed from the very gates of death to the joys and comforts of life; and the bounteous meal to which we all within the next hour sat down, was more truly a Thanksgiving supper than any one, I will venture to say, which was ever partaken in the Green Mountains."

"But, grandfather," here spoke the listening boy, as the other brought his narrative to a close, "my mother's name is Minny, and my father's is Constant Martin?"

"Yes, my boy; they were married the very next winter after the remarkable event I have been describing, and all the sooner for it, as she had not before fully made up her mind. Yes, they are your parents; and they both, as well as the rest of us, have reason forever to remember the DREAM AND FULFILLMENT."

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**PLEASURE** is to a woman what the sun is to the flower: if moderately enjoyed, it beautifies, it refreshes, and it improves—if immoderately, it withers, deteriorates, and destroys.

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**AN ANNOYED LADY.**—This correspondent says that a gentleman with whom she has been acquainted for several months, and who has on many occasions taken dinner and tea at her table, is in the habit of telling his acquaintances things about her housewifery which, though trifling, become annoying by frequent repetition and gossipping discussion. One thing which he mentioned was, that on one occasion several of her tea-cups had no handles—a fact of no consequence one way or the other, yet not a pleasant thing for the lady to have repeated to her, or about her. She says that the same person often speaks to her of defects and faults which he notices in other families; and that he even speaks of kisses which he alleges to have received from lady friends. "What do you think of such a man?" asks our correspondent, "and what should be done with him?" We think that he is an ignorant, pretentious upstart, who has yet to acquire the first elements of good breeding. In all civilized society, the man who runs down, or in an unfriendly manner criticises the fare and appointments of a table at which he is permitted to sit as a guest, is looked upon as an ungentlemanly fellow, and he soon finds respectable social circles closed against him. And a man who is so wanting in self-respect and in common decency as to boast of being kissed by ladies, giving names and dates, ought to be banished to some land—if such a desolate land there be—where he would never more see even a single, solitary member of the angelic sisterhood.

**MINNIE.**—We are all accustomed to express our opinion very freely of one another, and it is our right to do so, in the absence of the person criticised. When a person makes mischief by reporting to you an unfavorable opinion that has been expressed respecting you, the whole weight of your indignation and contempt should fall upon the reporter. You should also consider that a person who is mean enough to report private conversation calculated to give pain to you, is also mean enough to falsify what he reports. These remarks do not apply to cases in which criminal charges have been made, but merely to those unfavorable reflections upon character which are harmless so long as they do not reach the ear of the person reflected upon. For example—if an acquaintance should express unfavorable opinions respecting your housekeeping, your dress, your manners, your grammar, or your mental calibre, it would be base and mean to report to you his remarks. But if any one should accuse you of falsehood, theft or immodesty, it would not be improper for any friend who heard the charge to make you acquainted with it.

**J. L.**—The Zouaves originated in the following manner: When the French had conquered Algiers and established a government there, they formed the scheme of organizing a corps of native troops, in imitation of the English in India. They selected these troops from the most brave and warlike tribe of the Algerians, called Zooaouas, who retained their native costume and many of their own modes of fighting. These troops, commanded by French officers, were soon joined by French volunteers, who, in dress and usages, conformed to the natives. In the course of time, the French outnumbered the Algerians in the Zouave regiments, and, finally, it was found best to dispense entirely with the native troops. The Zouave regiments are now composed of Frenchmen, who preserve the Algerian costume and style.

**RICARDO.**—An English peer of the realm cannot hold a seat in the House of Commons. But a considerable number of persons in Great Britain are styled lords who are not peers, and, therefore, not entitled to seats in the House of Lords. The eldest sons of dukes, marquises, and earls are called lords by courtesy, and there are certain Irish and Scotch peers who are not peers of the realm. Lord Palmerston, for example, is an Irish lord, but an English commoner, and he sits in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell is styled lord, because he is the son of the Duke of Bedford, but he is no more a peer than his groom is.

**UNCLE JOE.**—We cannot throw much light upon the origin of the "Tiger" which is sometimes given after three cheers. Twenty correspondents have asked the question during the last few weeks. In an old letter, written just 94 years ago at Philadelphia, we find the following: "The crowd gave us three cheers *and a blessing;* then marched off." This sentence suggests the conjecture that it was formerly the custom to add a God-bless-you to the cheers, and it is just possible that our barbarous *tiger* has grown out of that custom. We respectfully suggest the suppression of that wild beast.

**H. N.**—We do *not* believe in the "flogging of children," either at home or at school, and especially not in the latter case. It is bad enough for a child to be beaten at home; to flagellate him at school is utterly brutal. The teacher who cannot govern children without resorting to brute force, has mistaken his vocation, and should turn his attention to some other means of livelihood at an early day. It is, of course, more difficult, and requires far more work, and work of a higher grade, too, to govern children by human reason than by physical violence.

**S. K.**—Perhaps you might borrow a valuable educational idea from Gideon, the captain of the famous three hundred "who lapped of the water with their tongues, even as a dog lappeth." Your neighbors seem to be very much like "the men of Succoth," to whom Gideon had to administer a lesson. "And he took the elders of the city, and *thorns* of the wilderness and *briars*, and *with them* he *taught* the men of Succoth." Lessons that are tattooed into the pupil with thorns of the wilderness and briars, could hardly fail to be impressive and lasting.

**FLORA.**—Your teacher may have particular and personal reasons for instructing you to "amplify" and "spread out" your compositions as much as possible; but as a general rule such instruction would prove pernicious. The great majority of writers need to be taught the art of condensation, rather than that of amplification. As a celebrated author said, many years ago—

"As 'tis a greater mystery in the art
Of painting, to foreshorten any part,
Than draw it out; so 'tis in books the chief
Of all perfections to be plain and brief."

**BOY.**—This young gentleman asks how it came to pass that New York has a Latin name, *Novum Eboracum*, though it did not exist when Latin was spoken. Eboracum was the name given by the Romans who conquered Britain, to the city which is now called York. It was a place of renown even at that early day, for two Roman emperors held their court there, and there Constantine the Great was born. New York being named after this ancient Roman city, is called in Latin Novum Eboracum.

**HELEN.**—We presume that the custom of making wills is as ancient as the custom of holding property. The forty-eighth chapter of Genesis might be called Jacob's last will and testament. Solon made laws about wills as early as 578 before Christ. The Koran contains many regulations respecting wills. In short, we have no knowledge of an age in which the custom of making wills was not known; although, of course, they were made orally before the art of writing was invented.

**ADOLESCENS.**—We think that your parents acted justifiably in preventing your marriage. A boy of twenty would be almost certain to make a fool of himself in such a case. It will be time enough for you to think of marrying, half a dozen years hence. Shakspeare, who is considered good authority on almost every question, says—

"A *young* man married is a young man marred."

**ROUGH AND READY.**—Alfred the Great was formerly considered the inventor of the trial by jury, but later investigations appear to show that the custom of deciding disputes by referring them to twelve disinterested men was in vogue long before Alfred's day. The probability is, that Alfred regulated and legalized an institution which was already rooted in the habits and affections of the people.

**BARDSTOWN.**—Flirtation in all its forms is despicable and wrong. The practice of it argues a mind both shallow and false. We cannot decide which is the most criminal, the husband who flirts with another woman, or a woman who accepts attentions from a married man which she would not like her husband to pay to any but herself.

**CIVIS.**—The last executions for witchcraft, of which we can find any record, occurred in Poland, Jan. 17th, 1775, when nine poor old women were burnt at the stake. They were accused of bewitching the land and rendering it unfruitful.

**JOSEPH.**—Is it proper for a young lady to go to a place of amusement in the evening, accompanied only by her mother? It is neither proper nor possible; for ladies unaccompanied by gentlemen are not admitted into respectable places of amusement at night.

**MORTIMER.**—It is not usual for a young gentleman, on being introduced to a young lady, to shake hands with her, but it is perfectly proper for him to do so if he prefers that mode of salutation.

**SUBSCRIBER.**—Most cases of stammering can be cured, and, perhaps, all can be greatly alleviated. There are several persons in your city, who undertake the cure of stammering.

**BURNS.**—This inquirer asks which of the following expressions is correct: Two table-spoonsful, two table-spoonfuls, or two table-spoonful. The proper expression is two table-spoonfuls.

**J. C.**—Your neighbor has no right to kill your dog because it annoys him by barking at night.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*